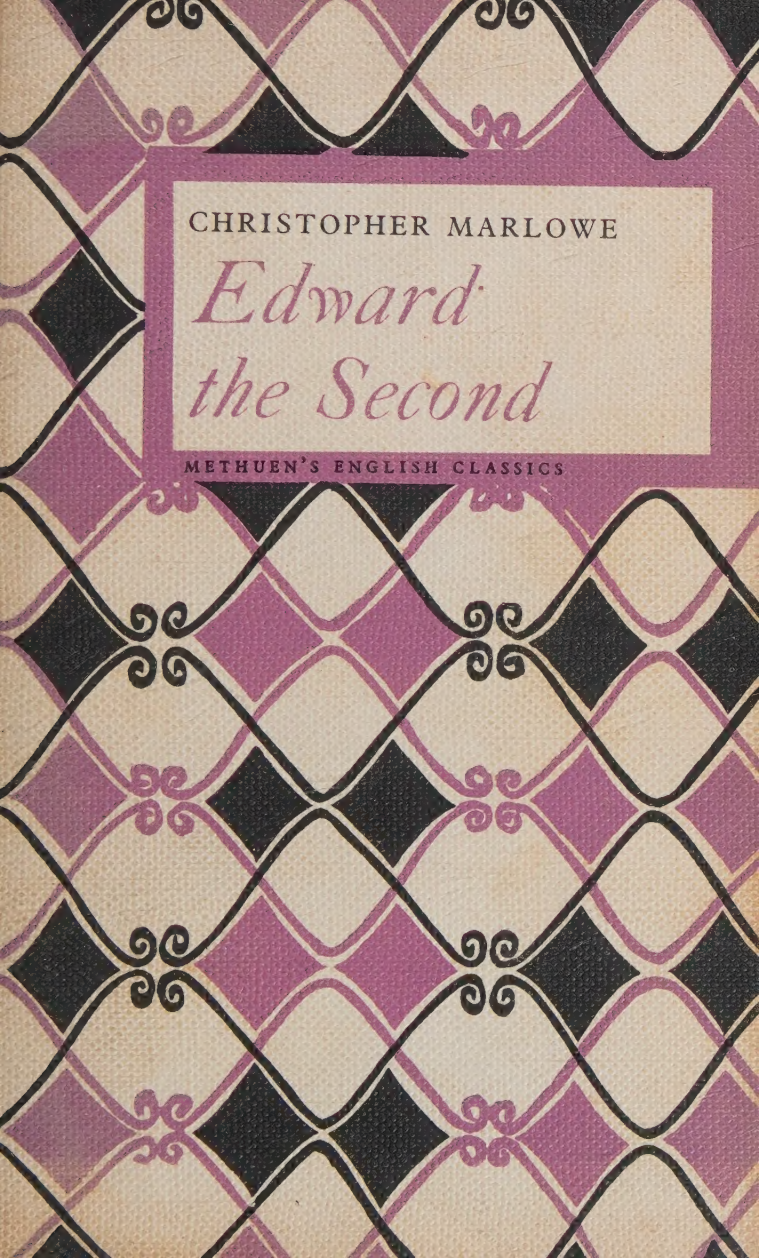
CHRISTOPHER MARLOWE

Edward the Second

METHUEN'S ENGLISH CLASSICS



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Mary. R O'Connor

Edward the Second

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Edward II. *By Christopher Marlowe. Ed. R. S. Knox.*
Dr. Faustus. *By Christopher Marlowe. Ed. R. S. Knox.*
Tamburlaine the Great, Pts. 1 & 2. *By Christopher Marlowe. Ed. R. S. Knox.*
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Edward the Second

by

Christopher Marlowe

Edited By

R. S. KNOX, M.A.

ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR OF ENGLISH LITERATURE
UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO

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PREFATORY NOTE

THE text of this edition of *Edward II* is substantially that of the Second Quarto (1598), although several emendations by various editors have been accepted. For the scene locations and stage directions the edition of Dyce (1858) has, for the most part, been followed.

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INTRODUCTION

1. MARLOWE'S LIFE AND WORK

LITTLE is known of the circumstances of Christopher Marlowe's tragically short life of less than thirty years. He was born at Canterbury in February, 1564, Shakespeare's birth year, and was the son of John Marlowe, a shoemaker and "clarke of St. Maries." He received his early education at the King's School, Canterbury, and about 1581 went to Benet (Corpus Christi) College, Cambridge. In 1583 he took the degree of B.A. and in 1587 was a Master of Arts. From his Cambridge days probably dates his earliest literary work, the translations of Ovid's *Amores*. Tradition has it that the young Marlowe, like his Bohemian contemporary Greene, was intended for the Church; but this may be no more than a piquant addition to the irreligion afterwards ascribed to him. With equal uncertainty it is said that he fought for a time in the Netherland campaign. By 1587 he was undoubtedly in London, one of the band of writers for the stage. He was early a member, and indeed the principal playwright, of the Lord Admiral's company, whose chief actor was the celebrated Edward Alleyn, regarded as the most accomplished tragedian of the day. It may be that Marlowe, like Shakespeare, himself took an acting part, but a supposed old ballad which tells how he broke his leg while performing at the Curtain Theatre, is now generally recognized as one of the many forgeries of the ingenious but discredited scholar Collier. Fleay in his *History of the Stage* suggests that Marlowe later wrote for Lord Strange's company with which Shakespeare was

connected. It was, however, by the Admiral's men that most of his plays were presented.

The period of Marlowe's work for the theatre was only about six years, from 1587 to 1593. In that time he wrote at least six plays and may have had a hand in almost as many others. Despite the brevity of this theatrical career, he left a reputation which in the annals of our drama stands second only to that of Shakespeare. The undoubted Marlowe plays in the estimated order of their writing are as follows: *Tamburlaine the Great, Part I*, 1587; *Tamburlaine the Great, Part II*, 1587; *The Tragical History of Dr. Faustus*, 1588; *The Jew of Malta*, 1590; *Edward the Second*, 1590; *The Massacre of Paris*, 1593. One play, *The Tragedy of Dido, Queen of Carthage*, first printed in 1594, has been recognized as the joint work of Marlowe and Thomas Nashe. Its position among Marlowe's plays is difficult to decide. As a love tragedy it stands alone, and much in its style and versification would seem to warrant an early dating. It may, indeed, have been his first essay at play writing, put aside and later finished by Nashe.

Of the plays ascribed in part to Marlowe little need here be said. It was not infrequently the custom with Elizabethan dramatists to work together or to revise each other's plays, and the unravelling of the various strands has become an alluring task for scholars. The solution, however, must rest largely a matter of opinion, and there is a special difficulty where Marlowe's work is in question. At its best his writing certainly rings with a clear distinction, but in its more ordinary levels the bold features of his style by their very novelty lent themselves to imitation. And that Marlowe was imitated both in earnest and in burlesque is a commonplace to the student of the drama. The difficulty, then, is to be sure of the genuine, and past a personal judgment, when external evidence is unavailing, even the most acute can scarcely go. The most important plays in which Marlowe has, by scholars, been assigned a share are the *First Part of the Contention betwixt the two famous Houses of York and Lancaster*, *The true Tragedie of Richard Duke of Yorke*, the plays appearing in the Shakesperian canon as *Henry VI, Part II* and *Henry VI, Part III*, which are generally regarded as revisions of the histories aforenamed, and also *Henry VI*,

Part I. Different theories to explain this problem of authorship have been put forward. It is held by some that *The Contention* and *The True Tragedie* were the work of Marlowe, Greene and Peele, and that the revisions into the second and third parts of *Henry VI* were done jointly by Shakespeare and Marlowe, as was the writing of *Henry VI, Part I.* Others give Shakespeare a hand in the first versions of the histories; others, again, find their answer in different combinations of the four dramatists. The desire to associate Marlowe with the apprentice Shakespeare is particularly tempting. That the latter was influenced in dramatic ideal and in style there is no doubting, and many critics hold that this by itself is sufficient to account for the puzzling Marlowesque passages in Shakespeare's early histories; they see no need for conjecturing a closer relationship.

Of Marlowe's literary work apart from the drama his translation of Ovid's *Amores* has already been mentioned. He also left behind a translation of the first book of Lucan's *Pharsalia.* A lyric, as simply graceful as any of that rich lyrical period, *The Passionate Shepherd to his Love,* was published posthumously in 1599 as one of *The Passionate Pilgrim* collection. His most famous poem, however, is *Hero and Leander,* left by him unfinished and rounded off by the dramatist Chapman. It is one of those love narratives, filled with Renaissance passion and coloured pageantry, of which Shakespeare's *Venus and Adonis* is another of the many examples in Elizabethan literature. But in sheer sensuous beauty of description and in the music of its verse, none outdoes the two sestiads of Marlowe's poem.

The manner of Marlowe's life during his years in London can only be guessed from a few shadowy references and records. The success of his first plays *Tamburlaine* and *Faustus* brought him to the forefront of contemporary dramatists; while both the daring novelty of his manner and the reputed opinions of the young author seem to have aroused busy comment. Marlowe, indeed, was of the rebel temperament and evidently was unable to brook the calmer ways of life or the shackles of prescribed thought. Like his fellows of the theatre, Greene, Peele and Nashe, he seems to have varied the ardours of work with the

abandon of loose living. At any rate we read how Greene, dying and repentant, warns the others against their wickedness and particularly exhorts Marlowe to give up his atheism before it is too late. Nor is this the only reference to Marlowe's religious opinions. There is extant a curious and amusing document written by one Richard Bame in which he gives detailed testimony to Marlowe's atheism; but the stupidity of the statements attributed to Marlowe in this record goes a long way to prove the exaggeration of the charge, and it is but fair to remember that Marlowe chose the story of Faustus as a play theme, which, while depicting the fascination for interdicted things and thoughts, yet surely stands for the negation of the atheistic creed. Whatever may be the truth of these allegations against Marlowe,—and after all they are interesting only as a commentary on the undoubted imaginative and intellectual daring of the poet—it is certain that a warrant from the Privy Council was out against him just before he died. In June, 1593, when he was not yet thirty, he was stabbed at Deptford in a tavern brawl.

Few Elizabethan poets seem to have left such an abiding impression on their contemporaries. Tribute after tribute was written to Marlowe by his fellow poets after his death, and almost every one is to the point, stressing his ardent imagination. He is one of the few to whom Shakespeare makes reference in a play, the "dead shepherd" from whose *Hero and Leander* he quotes a line in *As You Like It*. Heywood refers to "his rare wit and art," Ben Jonson to his "mighty line." The finest and best known of these tributes is by Drayton:

> Next Marlowe, bathed in the Thespian Springs,
> Had in him those brave translunary things
> That our first poets had: his raptures were
> All air and fire, which made his verses clear:
> For that fine madness still he did retain,
> Which rightly should possess a poet's brain.

2. MARLOWE'S DRAMATIC ACHIEVEMENT

Before considering the merits of Marlowe's plays, it will be helpful to recall briefly the point at which these plays came in the development of English drama. In 1576, just

eleven years before the performance of *Tamburlaine*, the first permanent public theatre was built in London, and, despite the continued opposition of the City authorities, others quickly followed. As was to be expected, the establishment of these regular playhouses quickened an interest in the drama and led to an improvement in its quality. The writing of plays became an obvious profession for men of a literary bent who had to earn a livelihood, and from both Universities there came to London many young scholars eager to supply the theatrical demand. These, the University Wits, as they have been called, were the first real fashioners of the Elizabethan drama, and of them Marlowe was immeasurably the greatest.

When this group started writing under the new conditions of a permanent theatre, our drama had little to show of other than historical interest. The native plays, which had grown up wild and haphazard, mixing promiscuously scraps from the Moralities, from contemporary life, from history and from romantic story, had, indeed, already been offered the lesson of orderliness and decorum by the academic imitations of the classics. But nothing of moment had as yet resulted. It was left to the new generation from the Universities to shape and lift the old varied matter into serious drama. One or two of them had already heralded the change before Marlowe's first play appeared. John Lyly had started writing for the other main theatrical centre, the Court. He had given his *Campaspe, Sapho and Phao* and *Endymion*, three allegorical prose comedies, daintily written, delicately finished and flavoured for courtly taste. George Peele's *Arraignment of Paris* had appeared, the first and one of the most graceful of our early lyrical plays; and Thomas Kyd's *The Spanish Tragedy*, which set the fashion for a long series of revenge plays, dates from 1587, but whether before or after *Tamburlaine* is uncertain.

Yet, worthy as these plays are, none can vie with the earliest work of Marlowe in far-reaching importance. It was he, more than any other, who helped to draw English drama from the old rut of Morality and rambling Interlude and set it firmly on the straight road to greatness. Marlowe himself had no doubts about his mission. As a young man of twenty-three he came forward and boldly

made known his aim to redeem the drama from its past futility :

> From jigging veins of rhyming mother wits,
> And such conceits as clownage keeps in pay,
> We'll lead you to the stately tent of war,
> Where you shall hear the Scythian Tamburlaine
> Threatening the world with high astounding terms,
> And scourging kingdoms with his conquering sword.

This was his preface to *Tamburlaine*, a play which in theme and manner certainly justifies its challenging introduction. With it our tragic drama was for the first time dignified with high passion and poetry. Its two parts give the story of the Scythian shepherd who dreams of world conquest, fulfils his ambition magnificently and dies in his triumph. In structure the play is of the old epic type, built not into any succinct plot, but as a series of scenes presenting the chief incidents in the conqueror's career. The loose and primitive form can scarcely be deemed a flaw ; it seems quite in keeping with the imposing simplicity of the hero, whose personality lights up the play and gives it a sufficient unity. Its real excellence is, however, in the convincing manner by which Marlowe in a few scenes has suggested his high-tempered hero, and the passionate strength of language with which he has endowed him. Such is the scene in the second part where Tamburlaine imagines the reception awaiting his dying wife in heaven, or his earlier soliloquy when he broods over the beauty which neither poet nor artist can attain :

> What is beauty, saith my sufferings, then ?
> If all the pens that poets ever held
> Had fed the feelings of their masters' thoughts,
> And every sweetness that inspired their hearts,
> Their minds, and muses on admirèd themes :
> If all the heavenly quintessence they still
> From their immortal flowers of poesy,
> Wherein, as in a mirror, we perceive
> The highest reaches of a human wit ;
> If these had made one poem's period,
> And all combined in beauty's worthiness,
> Yet should there hover in their restless heads
> One thought, one grace, one wonder, at the least,
> Which into words no virtue can digest.

There unquestionably sounds the new wondrous music

of Elizabethan drama. Of course there is much else in *Tamburlaine* than a theme boldly conceived and written with passion and fine poetry. Often the bravery of the language becomes mere rhetorical rant, but even Marlowe's bombast has an energy and splendour which attract. It may gallop and prance theatrically, but it never crawls. It is never the sorry fustian we get in the earlier drama or sometimes from his fellow playwrights. Whatever Marlowe gives he gives handsomely. Historically the play was literally epoch-making. It rises like a Titan among a brood of pygmies. Its boldness in conception and style immediately set a fashion. It was praised, jeered at, quoted from and feverishly imitated. The world conqueror became a stock figure in our drama. Characters were taken from history and pictured as super-men, but these mere historical heroes were smothered in Tamburlaine's armour. Marlowe was artist enough to see that the type to be effective had to be set in surroundings of simple barbaric legend. And the ringing march of Marlowe's verse became echoed in a score of plays, even in the early history plays of Shakespeare. Indeed, the trumpet blare was there repeated so thoroughly and tricked so skilfully with the Marlowesque flourishes and grace-notes that critics are often at a loss to decide whether Shakespeare is merely imitating or whether Marlowe himself had a share in these plays.

Tamburlaine brought Marlowe into fame, but his highest achievement in drama is his second play *Faustus*. In the former he had imaginatively pictured a man whose lust was for limitless power, a shepherd who had fixed his destiny at the world's topmost point, " the perfect bliss and sole felicity " of the mightiest throne. This same idea of a passionate struggle to reach beyond the grasp of ordinary mortals is again his theme ; but the goal which Faustus tries to attain is a god-head. Marlowe takes this old story of the medieval magician who sells his soul to the Devil for twenty-four years of pleasure and the gift of all knowledge, and gives it a significance akin to that of such world-old myths as Eve's eating the apple or Prometheus' defiance of the Gods. The Faustus legend becomes for us a symbol of humanity's splendid struggle to reach the stars,—the tragedy of infinite aspiration ending

in agony and remorse. Whether Marlowe's execution is as fine as his conception is a matter of opinion. The play is merely a series of scenes as *Tamburlaine* was, many of which could be transposed without loss to the meaning; yet it would be wrong too hastily to condemn this craftsmanship. Just as in *Tamburlaine*, the minor incidents which fill in the play are of little moment; they are merely the necessary bridging between the few great situations where the emotional and intellectual vacillations of Faustus' mind are vividly laid bare. The final scene when Lucifer claims the doctor's soul impresses with a pity and awe unmatched elsewhere in Marlowe's drama; and perhaps the supreme example of Marlowe's passionate poetry is the doctor's ecstatic cry when he looks on Helen of Troy:

> Was this the face that launched a thousand ships
> And burnt the topless towers of Ilium?
> Sweet Helen, make me immortal with a kiss.
> Her lips suck forth my soul; see where it flies!—
> Come, Helen, come, give me my soul again.
> Here will I dwell, for Heaven is in these lips,
> And all is dross that is not Helena.
> I will be Paris, and for love of thee,
> Instead of Troy, shall Wertenberg be sacked:
> And I will combat with weak Menelaus,
> And wear thy colours on my plumèd crest:
> Yea, I will wound Achilles in the heel,
> And then return to Helen for a kiss.
> Oh, thou art fairer than the evening air
> Clad in the beauty of a thousand stars;
> Brighter art thou than flaming Jupiter
> When he appeared to hapless Semele:
> More lovely than the monarch of the sky
> In wanton Arethusa's azured arms:
> And none but thou shalt be my paramour.

The *Jew of Malta* and *Edward II* are the only other plays that need be considered in estimating Marlowe's dramatic merits. These show an interesting development of his art. They both deal with subjects that have a more real background of history than either of his former plays; the interest is less now in the vivid presentation of a single figure and more in the story that centres round the hero. Marlowe has therefore set aside the loose epic manner of construction and tried to weld his matter into a regularly developing plot. The success with which he has done this in *Edward II* and its claim to be regarded as our first art

history play are discussed later, but the change in structural method is already apparent in *The Jew of Malta*. This latter play, apart from the evidence it affords of Marlowe's ability to shape his material into a fitting form, can scarcely rank with the three other plays. From a magnificent opening scene in which the greed of the Jew is suggested with all Marlowe's passionate strength, it develops into a lurid sensationalism. The stage picture of the Jew set a fashion which Shakespeare followed later with his Shylock.

Throughout Marlowe's work one distinguishing quality is apparent. There is no drama that is so clearly the mirror of the writer's temperament. Shakespeare's personality eludes us in his plays. We can scarcely get his likes and dislikes. With Marlowe there is no such questioning. What he writes reveals the man, the spiritual man that counts, almost as lucidly as if he had left his soul's confessions. He himself is with these splendid egoists who rebel against the clogs of ordinary life and whose cry is

> That peril is the chiefest way to happiness
> And resolution honour's fairest aim.
> What glory is there in a common good
> That hangs for every peasant to achieve?
> That like I best that flies beyond my reach.

With his heroes he rises for a moment above life's limitations to an imagined world where his own ardent aspirations are attained. We can say that Tamburlaine, revelling in the magnificence of worldly power, or Faustus, lured in his desire for all knowledge to touch things interdicted, is the spiritual Marlowe with much more confidence than we can say that Hamlet is Shakespeare. Moreover, this tendency in Marlowe to choose as his central figure men of surpassing ambitions through whom he can reflect his own high temper, naturally limits the range of his dramatic portraiture. There is in his plays nothing of that variety of character which Shakespeare gives. Outside *Edward II* he scarcely steps down to interest himself in mere ordinary men and women. In his other plays one massive figure dominates,—Tamburlaine, Faustus, the Jew—and the rest are mere accessories, colourless shadows. Nor does Marlowe generally reveal character in the Shakespearian way.

He had little of the art which shows the interplay of varying motives on a mind or which traces the change wrought by man's conflict with circumstance. Each of his plays, although again *Edward II* must be excepted, tends to become a series of situations in which the hero is presented under the stress of one mastering passion.

What is, perhaps, Marlowe's most important service to our drama remains to be mentioned, his establishment of blank verse as the fitting metre for English poetic tragedy. Blank verse of a sort had, of course, been used in drama before Marlowe. It had been introduced in *Gorboduc*, the academic classical play, and had fitfully been employed since then. But it was Marlowe's example that ensured its commanding position in later drama. It was he who "first unlocked the secrets of blank verse and taught his successors how to play upon its hundred stops." In its earlier form the verse had tended to strut with a stiff regularity. The iambic beat was seldom varied, the pause within the line fell almost invariably after the fourth syllable and came again at the line's end, while each couplet as in the older rhymed verse tended in sense to stand by itself. Throughout Marlowe's plays, except in the most emotional passages, there is still this inclination to the end-stopt line, but within there is a new music with varying pause and stress. But in his highest moments, as in Tamburlaine's vision of Zenocrate in heaven or the Faustus death scene, Marlowe's verse has a freedom and rhythmical beauty that place it beside the best verse music in our language. Even more than his skill as a metrist, it was the beauty and bravery of Marlowe's diction that enriched the new blank verse and gave it popularity. In his preface to *Tamburlaine* he had promised "high astounding terms," and it is the magnificence of these, even when they result in rhetoric rather than in poetry, which ensures the ringing march of his lines. He was, indeed, the first great poet who handled the new metre, besides being the first great poet who essayed the dramatic form. As Swinburne has said: "Before him there was neither genuine blank verse nor a genuine tragedy in our language. After his arrival the way was prepared, the paths were made straight, for Shakespeare."

3. THE HISTORY PLAY BEFORE *EDWARD II.*

From its beginning European drama had dealt with the matter of history. The Mysteries and Miracle Plays had been the outcome of an attempt to set before an illiterate people vivid pictures of the only history that for them had interest and importance, man's past and future as told in the scriptures. In the Miracle cycles which were performed in England by the medieval guildsmen, this momentous story was presented in a series of separate pageants, taking the spectators from the Creation to the Day of Judgment. It was a history of the world given in parts and in chronological sequence, and the influence of this simple method of structure remained when drama had long passed beyond this early stage. The Morality Plays, which gradually superseded the Miracles, shifted the emphasis from Bible story to the Christian's conduct in the world. They dwelt on the temptations which " Everyman " had to face and gave lessons on the righteous way to live. It was into this Morality play type that the matter of English history was first introduced. This was in the middle of the sixteenth century, when the adherents of the Reformation were bitterly attacking the Church of Rome ; and John Bale, to forward the cause of the Reformers, dramatized the old struggle against the Pope in the reign of King John. Bale's *King Johan*, with its curious blend of such persons as the King, Stephen Langton, Nobility, Clergy, England, etc., illustrates the phase through which the History Play and our drama in general passed before they were freed from the fetters of the Morality.

The first plays in which English history is dramatized, not for any didactic purpose but for its own interest, date from around 1580. The evolution to this pure Chronicle Play was gradual and part of the larger story of dramatic development, but the special impetus at this time towards historical subjects must be remembered. The sense of nationality had been steadily growing in England since the reign of Henry VII, but it was not until Elizabeth ascended the throne that a real unity was reached. This was naturally accompanied by a more eager desire to know the story of England's past and to celebrate her heroes,—and the desire was well answered. It was just after the

queen's accession that the great English prose chronicles were written. The older *Chronicle* of Fabyan was republished; *A Summarie of Englyshe Chronicles* by John Stowe appeared in 1565 and had run through ten editions by 1604; and, to pass over lesser works, there was published in 1577 the most famous of all Elizabethan prose histories, *The Chronicles of England, Scotlande and Irelande* by Ralph Holinshed. It was, however, with the immediate menace of Spain and the beating back of her attempted invasion in 1588 that patriotic feeling was roused to its fullest pitch; and the nation's ardour and pride and its loyalty to the queen more than ever found voice in literature. From the year of the Armada to the turn of the century no subject was more popular on the stage than English history.

The earliest of these Chronicle Plays now extant is *The Famous Victories of Henry the Fifth*, which Shakespeare certainly knew before he wrote his two parts of *Henry IV* and his *Henry V*. Of slightly later date are *The Life and Death of Jack Straw* and the double play of *The Troublesome Reign of King John*. Peele's *Edward I*, the *First and Second Parts of the Contention betwixt the two famous Houses of Yorke and Lancaster*, later transformed into the second and third parts of *Henry VI*, and perhaps *The True Tragedy of Richard III* make up the list of Chronicle Plays which preceded Marlowe's *Edward II* in 1590. It is unnecessary here to consider the individual merits of those early dramatizations of English history. For the present purpose it will suffice to mark certain features which they have more or less in common and which distinguish them from Marlowe's play. They are built in the old loose manner which marked the Miracle cylces, a string of scenes with scarcely more connection than that they consecutively cover a period of time. The successive chapters of the narrative history are, so to speak, shown on the stage, enlivened here and there by digressive comedy, by spectacular shows, or, as in *Edward I*, by enacting the slanderous legend about his Spanish queen, Elinor of Castile. There is almost no attempt to select the incidents and shape them into a plot or relate them to character. The plays are dramatic only in the sense that the matter is presented in action and dialogue on the stage.

It was Marlowe, in his *Edward II*, who first transformed the chronicle narrative into a regular play. Instead of the older method of mere panoramic presentation he has deliberately chosen his scenes and even altered historical relations to make the story fit into a preconceived design. He has rigidly excluded all inessentials and refused to lower his serious aim with comic diversion. He has centred on the character of Edward and shaped out of his career our first tragic History Play.

4. *EDWARD II*

Date and Editions.

There is no certain evidence for fixing the date of *Edward II*. It was entered in the Register of the Stationers' Company, July, 1593, two months after Marlowe's death, and in the following year an edition of the play was published. A single copy of this 1594 edition is extant, discovered in 1876 in the library at Cassel. In 1598 a Quarto edition was published, the title of which is as follows :—*The troublesome raigne and lamentable death of Edward the second, King of England : with the tragicall fall of proud Mortimer : And also the life and death of Peirs Gaueston, the great Earle of Cornewall, and mighty favorite of King Edward the second, as it was publiquely acted by the right honorable the Earle of Pembroke his seruauntes. Written by Chri. Marlow Gent. Imprinted at London for William Jones, dwelling neare Holborne conduit at the Signe of the Gunne.* Other Quarto editions were printed in 1612 and 1622. There are only slight differences between the texts of the various editions, and *Edward II* is almost entirely free from the corruptions and seeming insertions which are found in the texts of Marlowe's other plays. In the early editions the play is not divided into Acts and Scenes.

It was almost certainly written after *Tamburlaine*, *Faustus* and *The Jew of Malta*. Compared with these it shows an obvious structural advance ; the earlier rhetorical exuberance has been curbed and the blank verse endowed with a new variety and ease. This change to a greater restraint in manner and compactness in form may, of course,

be regarded as partly due to the more ordinary subject which Marlowe chooses to dramatize; but, admitting this, there is little doubt that *Edward II* marks a later stage in his art. The writing of the play is usually assigned to 1590–1.

Source and Treatment of History.

There were several accounts of the reign of Edward II which Marlowe might have read to gather the matter for his play,—sundry poems dealing with the king's life and death as the lamented "fall of a prince," but more especially the Chronicles of Fabyan, of Stowe and of Holinshed. Although there is evidence in the play that he knew all three chronicles, it was on Holinshed's Chronicle, published in 1577 and issued in a second edition in 1587, that he seems particularly to have relied. The "jig" quoted by Lancaster (II. 2) is found only in Fabyan, the details of the treatment of the captured king (V. 3) are given by Stowe; but these and one or two other minor points are the sum of his indebtedness to these historians.

It is not difficult to understand why Marlowe, searching English history for a suitable tragic theme, should have fixed on the reign of Edward II as narrated by Holinshed. The chief events of the period fit themselves almost naturally into the recognized tragic formula: the conflict of the king with the barons, his momentary victory and his ensuing defeat and death. It is true that the character of Edward scarcely fits him for the rôle of tragic hero; yet his ruinous passion for favourites, weakness though it be, becomes just such a single dominating motive as Marlowe liked to exhibit.

It is interesting to examine the methods by which Marlowe has transformed the narrative into dramatic shape. His first concern being with Edward's character and his central purpose being to present events as the inevitable consequences of the king's infatuation, he has not scrupled to falsify history. To vivify his picture and to attain the necessary unity he has freely omitted, condensed and regrouped the facts of Holinshed's chronicle. Young Mortimer, who historically figures only in the latter part of the reign, but who is there associated with the queen in contriving

Edward's death, is naturally brought forward to be the King's chief antagonist from the beginning. His character becomes Marlowe's second centre of interest. The picture of Queen Isabella is for the most part imaginary. Edward's neglect and his callous behaviour to her have no definite warrant in history, but fulfil the evident purpose of throwing light on the king's temperament and on the queen's later alienation. In order to obtain a continuity of the king's obsession for dangerous favourites and of the nobles' hostility, Marlowe has immediately followed Gaveston's period of minionship with that of the Spencers. In reality, it was not till 1318, some six years after Gaveston's death, that the younger Spencer gained the king's full confidence and became his instrument ; but the dramatist has accepted, or at least taken advantage of, one of Holinshed's entries for 1312 that " King Edward now after that the foresaid Piers Gaveston the earle of Cornewall was dead, nothing reformed his manners, but as one that detested the counsell and admonition of his Nobles, chose such to be about him, and to be of his privie councell, which were known to be men of corrupt and most wicked living (as the writers of that age report) ; amongst these were two of the Spencers, Hugh the father, and Hugh the sonne, which were notable instruments to bring him unto the liking of all kind of naughtie and evill rule." In order further to accentuate the king's failing, the Spencers are suggested as being followers of Gaveston and of lower birth than they really were. Historical truth has also been sacrificed to dramatic effect in the matter of Lancaster's feud with the king. The earl's defeat at Boroughbridge in 1322 and his consequent execution are in the play falsely suggested as the outcome of Edward's immediate resolve to exact vengeance for the death of Gaveston in 1312. Again, Marlowe has effectivelly juggled with the dates of the Irish troubles of 1315–16, the battle of Bannockburn in 1314 and of the Scottish raids into the north of England, bringing these happenings together as results of Gaveston's ill counsels. In like manner he puts aside history in making Warwick, who had died in 1315, become one of the king's victims after Boroughbridge. He conveniently glosses over Edward's trouble with the French king about the homage due for his French lands ; and in many smaller

ways moulds history to his dramatic needs. The result of this selection and alteration of the events of Edward's twenty years is a most skilfully knit tragic plot, our first artistic masterpiece in play structure ; and, if the characters Marlowe creates are not such as historical research will allow, they are for the most part sufficiently real to justify the conduct and actions attributed to them.

Examination of the Play.

In studying the workmanship of *Edward II* there is one main line of examination which may interestingly be followed,—Marlowe's attempt to overcome an initial difficulty which faced him in choosing this subject. As has been pointed out, he has conceived and shaped his play not only as a dramatization of history, but as a tragedy issuing from the character of Edward ; and the king's character, as suggested traditionally and historically, had not the requisite greatness for a tragic hero. The failing in him from which the catastrophe issued had little nobility about it : it was too much like mere foolishness. Marlowe has fully realized this and in two ways has attempted to get past the obstacle. It may be helpful to keep them in mind before analysing the play further. He has firstly tried to draw our sympathy to the king by withdrawing it, in the latter part of the play, from his two chief antagonists, the queen and young Mortimer,—and in the opinion of some critics, he has, by doing so, marred the consistency of the queen's and of Mortimer's character. His second method is not unlike that used by Shakespeare when faced with a somewhat similar problem in dramatizing the story of King Lear. He has intensified the resultant catastrophe and shown his hero at his greatest when burdened by the retribution for his own folly. In *King Lear* Shakespeare has spread the catastrophe through three-quarters of the play ; there the calamity comes swiftly and the old king early rises to a passionate greatness. Marlowe, on the other hand, has packed most of the redeeming events into one intense last Act.

The play opens very effectively with a vivid glimpse of the character of Gaveston, the instrument of the king's undoing. His soliloquy and his reception of the three

petitioners stamp the man from the outset, shrewd, time-serving, but still with a good-fellow fascination about him. He has no immediate use for the poor men,

> But yet it is no pain to speak men fair;
> I'll flatter these and make them live in hope.

He hates England and its people, but is honest in his liking for Edward. He returns not because

> I love the city, or the men,
> But that it harbours him I hold so dear—
> The king, upon whose bosom let me die,
> And with the world be still at enmity.

The voluptuous temperament of the pliant king is finely suggested in Gaveston's resolve to pander to it,—and the lines glow with that sensuous paganism in which Marlowe's own Renaissance temper delighted:

> Music and poetry is his delight;
> Therefore I'll have Italian masks by night,
> Sweet speeches, comedies, and pleasing shows;
> And in the day, when he shall walk abroad,
> Like sylvan nymphs my pages shall be clad:
> My men, like satyrs grazing on the lawns,
> Shall with their goat-feet dance the antic hay.
> Sometime a lovely boy in Dian's shape,
> With hair that gilds the water as it glides,
> Crownets of pearl about his naked arms,
> And in his sportful hands an olive-tree,
> To hide those parts which men delight to see,
> Shall bathe him in a spring; and there hard by,
> One like Actæon peeping through the grove,
> Shall by the angry goddess be transformed,
> And running in the likeness of a hart
> By yelping hounds pulled down, shall seem to die.

The rest of the first Act not only energetically opens the conflict but throws a first vivid light on the protagonists. Incident after incident adds to the unattractiveness of the king: his weak querulous attitude to the justly bullying nobles, his behaviour to the Bishop of Coventry and his extravagant flinging of honours at his favourite. Marlowe has shown a fine discretion and sense of theatrical value in the few situations which he has here chosen for the play's exposition. Mortimer in this Act, the most prominent of the barons, is suggested as the patriot, indignant at the

king's high-handedness, with a good Englishman's hatred of the upstart Frenchman and determined that he at any rate will abide no such domination. Except in his spirit of haughty independence, we get as yet no inkling of the later Mortimer, unscrupulous and urged by the secret ambition "to make fortune's wheel turn as he please." He is pictured as the typical aristocrat. What in Gaveston most annoys him is his low birth :

> his wanton humour grieves not me ;
> But this I scorn, that one so basely born
> Should by his sovereign's favour grow so pert,
> And riot it with the treasure of the realm.

And we see the same irritation against the pretensions of the foreigner in that little picture which Mortimer draws of the king and Gaveston :

> While others walk below, the king and he
> From out a window laugh at such as we,
> And flout our train, and jest at our attire.
> Uncle, 'tis this makes me impatient.

The case against the king is carried further by his treatment of Isabella, patient under his insults and scorn, weakly hurting herself in humouring his whims. She tries to keep her sorrow to herself :

> Look where the sister of the King of France
> Sits wringing of her hands, and beats her breast !

But already there is a hint that it is to Mortimer she turns first for sympathy :

> Ah, Mortimer ! now breaks the king's hate forth,
> And he confesseth that he loves me not.

And Mortimer, blunt and never at a loss, has the obvious remedy on his tongue :

> Cry quittance, madam, then ; and love not him.

The later relations of Isabella and Mortimer are again skilfully anticipated in Scene 4 by his acquiescence in her plan for the recall of Gaveston.

The first Act closes with the clash of interests lucidly outlined. We know the king and half know Mortimer and

the queen. There is a momentary truce which we feel is merely the foreshadowing lull.

The second Act opens with the introduction of the second favourite. Marlowe, as has been said, ignores the facts of history and brings young Spencer forward for the closer knitting of his plot. There is a lightening touch of satire in the scene where Spencer tutors Baldock in the ways of the courtier :

> 'Tis not a black coat and a little band,
> A velvet-caped coat, faced before with serge,
> And smelling to a nosegay all the day,
> Or holding of a napkin in your hand,
> Or saying a long grace at a table's end,
> Or making low legs to a nobleman,
> Or looking downward with your eyelids close,
> And saying, "Truly, an't may please your honour,"
> Can get you any favour with great men ;
> You must be proud, bold, pleasant, resolute,
> And now and then stab, as occasion serves.

And the self-confessed hypocrisy of Baldock heightens the impression of the king's folly in leaning on such a man.

With the second scene the truce is completely snapped and the struggle between Edward and his barons reaches a head. Edward refuses to rescue the elder Mortimer from the Scots, makes no bones about the matter, but curtly tells Mortimer to ransom his uncle himself. In reply, Mortimer, backed by his peers, lets himself go. The situation and Mortimer's attitude are closely paralleled by Hotspur's impulsive defiance of the king in Shakespeare's *Henry IV*. Mortimer, however, outdoes Hotspur in his daring, flouting Edward in the picture which he tosses him :

> When wert thou in the field with banner spread,
> But once ? and then thy soldiers marched like players,
> With garish robes, not armour ; and thyself,
> Bedaubed with gold, rode laughing at the rest,
> Nodding and shaking of thy spangled crest,
> Where women's favours hung like labels down.

It is the finest scene in the play for the crisp bite of the dialogue between the two quick-tempered, stubborn opponents. But there is a virtue in Edward now ; he has got will, if perverted will. He stands finely at bay before his baiters and whips himself into action :

> Edward, unfold thy paws,
> And let their lives' blood slake thy fury's hunger.
> If I be cruel and grow tyrannous
> Now let them thank themselves, and rue too late.

After the manner of the Elizabethan stage, a sequence of short scenes hurries on the action to the capture of Gaveston. The longer fifth scene gives another excellent proof of Marlowe's ability to write lively dialogue, and one particularly happy point is made when Mortimer, the aristocrat, coolly ignores Gaveston while his disposal with Pembroke is being arranged. Gaveston ventures to remark that Mortimer's indirect rude comments are being carried too far, and the latter turns and silences him :

> Away, base groom, robber of king's renown !
> Question with thy companions and mates.

It is in the middle of this Act that the queen first definitely avows her preference for Mortimer, already suggested very faintly but not unskilfully :

> So well hast thou deserved, sweet Mortimer,
> As Isabel could live with thee for ever.

The third Act is short. It ends with the momentary triumph of the king's fortunes at the battle of Boroughbridge. Lancaster goes to the block, and Mortimer, sentenced to the Tower, unveils himself. Hitherto there has been little indication that his motives were other than patriotic. He has, indeed, been wilful, stubborn, overbearing, but, on the whole, sympathy has been with him. Now his other side is revealed :

> What, Mortimer ! can ragged stony walls
> Immure thy virtue that aspires to heaven ?
> No, Edward, England's scourge, it may not be ;
> Mortimer's hope surmounts his fortune far.

He has something of Tamburlaine's ambition now, " the sweet fruition of an earthly crown," and becomes very much like the villain of the piece.

The third Act had ended with the king ascendant. With the fourth the counter force, gathered and given strength by his own weakness, rises to overwhelm him. Six short scenes cover the historical ground from the battle of Boroughbridge to Edward's imprisonment in Killingworth.

These scenes are deftly chosen so that our attention and interest alternate between the king and the queen's party. The new knowledge given of Mortimer, the suggestions of his increasing self-interest, and his open association with the queen, tend already to draw some sympathy to Edward; and Marlowe has cunningly helped this transference by introducing the prince with his innocent allusions to his father and the scene of the hunted king moralizing on his fallen state and beseeching shelter:

> O! hadst thou ever been a king, thy heart,
> Pierced deeply with a sense of my distress,
> Could not but take compassion of my state.

The fifth Act is by far the most remarkable in the play. Marlowe has strained to retrieve sympathy for the king. He has doubled the catastrophe, giving two of the most powerful tragic scenes in the gallery of our drama. The abdication is made as impressive as the murder. He heaps up the king's spiritual torture, endows him with an emotional fineness which has hitherto been hidden, and unbares the conflict in Edward's mind with as sure and skilful incisions as he had shown at the death of Faustus; and yet he carefully avoids any mere physical horrors. With all the added attractiveness of his piteous position Edward's character is kept consistent with what has before been shown. Even when he cannot but resign his crown, he is still impotently wilful and defiant as of old. He tries pitifully to outbrave his enemies and breaks down. He buoys himself for a moment with the thought of the sanctity of his kingship, but sees the vanity of such a refuge:

> But what are kings, when regiment is gone,
> But perfect shadows in a sunshine day?

In despair he uncrowns himself and bursts into a last defiance:

> See, monsters, see, I'll wear my crown again!
> What, fear you not the fury of your king?

The quiet courtesy and firmness of the bishop and Leicester during this scene are admirably suggested. They accept the king's decision to retain the crown, but remind him of the consequences,—and finally Edward bows to his defeat:

> Here receive my crown;
> Receive it? no, these innocent hands of mine
> Shall not be guilty of so foul a crime.
> He of you all that most desires my blood,
> And will be called the murderer of a king,
> Take it. What, are you moved? pity you me?
> Then send for unrelenting Mortimer,
> And Isabel, whose eyes, being turned to steel,
> Will sooner sparkle fire than shed a tear.
> Yet stay, for rather than I'll look on them,
> Here, here! Now sweet God of heaven,
> Make me despise this transitory pomp,
> And sit for aye enthronizèd in heaven!
> Come, death, and with thy fingers close my eyes,
> Or if I live, let me forget myself.

Lamb has not overdone his praise of the reluctant pangs of abdicating royalty.

The death scene is difficult to match for stark unrelieved pathos. It is Marlowe's last rare master-stroke to get our sympathy for the king, and he shows no mercy. Edward's appeal to Lightborn, the story he unfolds of the miseries which, as a king, he has borne, even although he feels that the listener is to be his murderer, his longing for sleep, from which he fears he will never wake, make up a situation as poignant as any in Elizabethan tragic drama.

Marlowe might fitly have ended the play with Edward's death, but he abides by history and poetic justice. The new king takes vengeance for his father. The queen is destined for the Tower, and the aspiring Mortimer, cast from his pinnacle, goes to his death with thoughts of the fate of over-weening ambition:

> Base Fortune, now I see, that in thy wheel
> There is a point, to which when men aspire,
> They tumble headlong down: that point I touched,
> And, seeing there was no place to mount up higher,
> Why should I grieve at my declining fall?—
> Farewell, fair queen; weep not for Mortimer,
> That scorns the world, and, as a traveller,
> Goes to discover countries yet unknown.

There is no questioning the success of Marlowe's dramatization of Edward's reign. With a rare sureness he has chosen from the twenty years the main incidents that reveal Edward's weakness and his struggle, and these he has linked into a unified plot which holds a continuous interest and does not really falsify the significance of the

period. It must, of course, be remembered that the play-form is that demanded by the Elizabethan stage; the quick succession of short scenes and frequent change of location, though perhaps disconcerting to a modern audience, brought no difficulty in the comparatively bare and simple conditions of the original setting. One criticism which has been raised against the planning of the play is the repetition of the friendship motive which instigates Edward. This, however, is less a repetition than a continuation and is felt as such; it accentuates the weakness of the king and renews the hostility of the barons, and furthermore was a historical fact. Skilful as is his general shaping of the material into a real art form, Marlowe's genius is most plainly seen in his treatment of the two great scenes in the last Act. There, as in *Tamburlaine* and *Faustus*, he reveals his supreme mastery of the dramatic climax. Even Shakespeare has scarcely surpassed him in this power to present a tense emotional moment.

While the excellence of *Edward II* as a play must be admitted, it can scarcely be regarded as reaching great tragedy. A weakling, even if he be a king, falling through his folly is not a high tragic figure. It may be held that his very kingship gave him, in the minds of the Elizabethans, the necessary nobility, that the fall of any prince was tragic; but even to them this was but a loose conception of tragedy which certainly was not sufficient for Shakespeare or for most other dramatists of the time. There must be a greatness, a spiritual greatness, in the hero if his defeat is to inspire awe as well as pity, and Edward has not this. Until the fifth Act, despite the moments when he braves his barons, it is his inefficiency, his wrong-headedness, his pettishness which are most apparent. He struggles against nothing within himself. We do not even feel that he is the victim of ruthless circumstance. By being sensible he could have been saved. His initial weakness has been likened to that of Lear, but in the outcome there is nothing of that sublime spirit which exalts Lear and leaves us brooding on "the vast universal powers working in the world of individual fates and passion." Shakespeare's Richard II, whose story has been shaped into a play which closely and interestingly parallels Marlowe's, has been pictured with a like inefficiency. But Richard in his

weakness has been endowed with a fineness of temperament; he delicately savours his own misfortunes and realizes the irony of his life. There is a beauty in his nature which makes his fate not only piteous but tragic. In *Edward II* even the pathos of the two scenes in the fifth Act does not turn the play into a great tragedy. Edward, indeed, has our pity in his agony, but we have seen too much of the other side to regard him as the great soul defeated and still great in his defeat. The failure, however, does not detract from Marlowe's genius. He has made Edward real if not tragically impressive. The fault lies in the subject.

Marlowe's delineation of the queen is sometimes adversely criticized. It is held that " the transition from her faithful, but despairing attachment to the king to a guilty love for Mortimer " has not been indicated. This statement may briefly be considered. There are certainly many passages, especially in the first Act, which must be taken to indicate that the queen loves Edward, and some of these have the informative value that attaches to soliloquy. (Cp. I. 2, 64. I. 4, 163, 175, 197, 330.) On the other hand, the growing intimacy between the queen and Mortimer has also been adequately suggested. It is to Mortimer that Isabella from the beginning is made to turn for sympathy and help in her trials. Their conversation together in Act I, Scene 4, with Mortimer's ready acquiescence in her plan, is in itself meant to be significant, and certainly would be made more so on the stage ; but there are other casual hints, and both Gaveston and the king allude to the intimacy. (Cp. I, 4, 147 and 154.) At the beginning of Act II, Scene 4. Edward spurns the queen, talks of her lover Mortimer, and leaves Isabella lamenting his stony heart. Mortimer enters and in his direct strong way arranges that they should follow to capture Gaveston. Isabella implores him to leave her lest suspicion be aroused and, when alone, speaks her heart :

> So well hast thou deserved, sweet Mortimer,
> As Isabel could live with thee for ever.

The actual moment of change to a full union with Mortimer in love and intrigue is not shown. Isabella appears just once in the third Act preparing to leave for France, and from the fourth Act to the end of the play she is definitely

against the king. How are we to read all this? It is supposed by some that, in order to make the queen's behaviour in the second part of the play fall in with that in the first part, her early utterances of love for the king must be regarded as hypocritical,—which obviously Marlowe did not intend. As an alternative explanation it is held that Marlowe, in order to draw our sympathy to the king, has overdarkened the queen's character so as to leave it inconsistent with the attractive impression she makes in the first half. But, while admitting that Marlowe might have thrown a somewhat fuller light on the actual change, there is surely no inconsistency. The queen loved the weak king, but in her solitary despair was helped by Mortimer. His strength attracted her despite herself; the attraction, with the neglect and insults of her husband, became love, and whole-heartedly she went to him. She may have been weak and certainly afterwards hardened her heart to the king; she may have been conventionally immoral and wicked; but that is not to be inconsistent.

The change in Mortimer is not nearly so adequately accounted for. In the first part of the play he is the bluff, high-spirited baron who refuses to abide the king's folly. He has the attractiveness of Hotspur, but is more of a patriot. In the end he is the ambitious egoist, callous and unscrupulous. In the suddenness of the alteration Marlowe has certainly failed to take us with him. That it can be explained by the need of drawing sympathy to the king has been mentioned; but the flaw in portraiture remains.

Versification and Language

Something has already been said about the quality of Marlowe's blank verse. In *Edward II* the style of the verse and of the language has been fitly toned to the nature of the play. The verse is, on the whole, further away from the cramped stiffness of the old line, more varied and animated in its rhythms. This is especially evident in the scenes of brisk dialogue, in which the play is richer than either *Tamburlaine* or *Faustus*. On the other hand, although the general standard of the verse shows this advance, there is nowhere in *Edward II* such rhythmical beauties as mark the highest passages in the earlier plays. The history subject and Marlowe's evident detachment

in treating the new matter have not allowed the former passionate and lyrical raptures, and it is undoubtedly in these that his blank verse is at its best. There is a like restraint in the language of *Edward II* compared with that of the two former plays. If it has fewer periods of coloured poetry, it is also freer from the rhetoric of " high astounding terms." It is a workmanlike speech, direct and vigorous, with little ornament except for the simple classical allusions which come naturally from the scholar and which were fashionable in the writing of the time.

EDWARD THE SECOND

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

KING EDWARD THE SECOND.
PRINCE EDWARD, *his son, afterwards King Edward the Third.*
EDMUND EARL OF KENT, *brother to King Edward the Second.*
GAVESTON.
ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY.
BISHOP OF COVENTRY.
BISHOP OF WINCHESTER.
WARWICK.
LANCASTER.
PEMBROKE.
ARUNDEL.
LEICESTER.
BERKELEY.
MORTIMER, *the elder.*
MORTIMER, *the younger, his nephew.*
SPENCER, *the elder.*
SPENCER, *the younger, his son.*
BALDOCK.
BEAUMONT.
TRUSSEL.
GURNEY.
MATREVIS.
LIGHTBORN.
SIR JOHN OF HAINAULT.
LEVUNE.
RICE AP HOWEL.
MAYOR OF BRISTOW.
Abbot.
Monks.
Herald.
Lords, Poor Men, James, Mower, Champion, Messengers, Soldiers, and Attendants.

QUEEN ISABELLA, *wife of King Edward the Second.*
Niece to King Edward the Second, daughter of the Duke of Gloucester.
Ladies.

EDWARD THE SECOND

ACT I.

SCENE I. *London, a Street.*

Enter GAVESTON, *reading a letter.*

Gav. "*My father is deceased. Come, Gaveston,*
And share the kingdom with thy dearest friend."
Ah! words that make me surfeit with delight!
What greater bliss can hap to Gaveston
Than live and be the favourite of a king!
Sweet prince, I come; these, these thy amorous lines
Might have enforced me to have swum from France,
And, like Leander, gasped upon the sand,
So thou would'st smile, and take me in thine arms.
The sight of London to my exiled eyes
Is as Elysium to a new-come soul;
Not that I love the city, or the men,
But that it harbours him I hold so dear—
The king, upon whose bosom let me die,
And with the world be still at enmity.
What need the arctic people love starlight,
To whom the sun shines both by day and night?
Farewell base stooping to the lordly peers!
My knee shall bow to none but to the king.
As for the multitude, that are but sparks,
Raked up in embers of their poverty,—

Tanti; I'll fawn first on the wind
That glanceth at my lips, and flieth away.
But how now, what are these?

Enter three Poor Men.

Men. Such as desire your worship's service.
Gav. What canst thou do?
1*st Man.* I can ride.
Gav. But I have no horse. What art thou?
2*nd Man.* A traveller.
Gav. Let me see—thou would'st do well
To wait at my trencher and tell me lies at dinner-time;
And as I like your discoursing, I'll have you.
And what art thou?
3*rd Man.* A soldier, that hath served against the Scot.
Gav. Why, there are hospitals for such as you;
I have no war, and therefore, sir, begone.
3*rd Man.* Farewell, and perish by a soldier's hand,
That would'st reward them with an hospital.
Gav. Ay, ay, these words of his move me as much
As if a goose would play the porcupine,
And dart her plumes, thinking to pierce my breast.
But yet it is no pain to speak men fair;
I'll flatter these and make them live in hope. [*Aside.*
You know that I came lately out of France,
And yet I have not viewed my lord the king;
If I speed well, I'll entertain you all.
All. We thank your worship.
Gav. I have some business. Leave me to myself.
All. We will wait here about the court. [*Exeunt.*
Gav. Do; these are not men for me:
I must have wanton poets, pleasant wits,
Musicians, that with touching of a string
May draw the pliant king which way I please.
Music and poetry is his delight;
Therefore I'll have Italian masks by night,
Sweet speeches, comedies, and pleasing shows;

And in the day, when he shall walk abroad,
Like sylvan nymphs my pages shall be clad;
My men, like satyrs grazing on the lawns,
Shall with their goat-feet dance the antic hay.
Sometime a lovely boy in Dian's shape,
With hair that gilds the water as it glides,
Crownets of pearl about his naked arms,
And in his sportful hands an olive-tree,
To hide those parts which men delight to see,
Shall bathe him in a spring; and there hard by,
One like Actæon peeping through the grove,
Shall by the angry goddess be transformed,
And running in the likeness of a hart
By yelping hounds pulled down, shall seem to die;
Such things as these best please his majesty.—
Here comes my lord the king, and the nobles
From the parliament. I'll stand aside. [*Retires.*

Enter KING EDWARD, LANCASTER, *the* ELDER MORTIMER, YOUNG MORTIMER, KENT, WARWICK, PEMBROKE, *and* Attendants.

K. Edw. Lancaster!
Lan. My lord.
Gav. That Earl of Lancaster do I abhor. [*Aside.*
K. Edw. Will you not grant me this? In spite of them
I'll have my will; and these two Mortimers,
That cross me thus, shall know I am displeased. [*Aside.*
E. Mor. If you love us, my lord, hate Gaveston.
Gav. That villain Mortimer! I'll be his death. [*Aside.*
Y. Mor. Mine uncle here, this earl, and I myself,
Were sworn to your father at his death,
That he should ne'er return into the realm:
And know, my lord, ere I will break my oath,
This sword of mine, that should offend your foes,
Shall sleep within the scabbard at thy need,
And underneath thy banners march who will,
For Mortimer will hang his armour up.

Gav. Mort Dieu! [*Aside.*

K. Edw. Well, Mortimer, I'll make thee rue these words.

Beseems it thee to contradict thy king?
Frown'st thou thereat, aspiring Lancaster?
The sword shall plane the furrows of thy brows,
And hew these knees that now are grown so stiff.
I will have Gaveston; and you shall know
What danger 'tis to stand against your king.

Gav. Well done, Ned! [*Aside.*

Lan. My lord, why do you thus incense your peers,
That naturally would love and honour you
But for that base and obscure Gaveston?
Four earldoms have I, besides Lancaster—
Derby, Salisbury, Lincoln, Leicester,—
These will I sell, to give my soldiers pay,
Ere Gaveston shall stay within the realm;
Therefore, if he be come, expel him straight.

Kent. Barons and earls, your pride hath made me mute;
But now I'll speak, and to the proof, I hope.
I do remember, in my father's days,
Lord Percy of the north, being highly moved,
Braved Moubery in presence of the king;
For which, had not his highness loved him well,
He should have lost his head; but with his look
The undaunted spirit of Percy was appeased,
And Moubery and he were reconciled:
Yet dare you brave the king unto his face.—
Brother, revenge it, and let these their heads
Preach upon poles, for trespass of their tongues.

War. O, our heads!

K. Edw. Ay, yours; and therefore I would wish you grant—

War. Bridle thy anger, gentle Mortimer.

Y. Mor. I cannot, nor I will not; I must speak.—
Cousin, our hands I hope shall fence our heads,
And strike off his that makes you threaten us.

Come, uncle, let us leave the brain-sick king,
And henceforth parley with our naked swords.
E. Mor. Wiltshire hath men enough to save our heads.
War. All Warwickshire will love him for my sake.
Lan. And northward Gaveston hath many friends.—
Adieu, my lord; and either change your mind,
Or look to see the throne, where you should sit,
To float in blood; and at thy wanton head,
The glozing head of thy base minion thrown.

[*Exeunt all except* KING EDWARD, KENT, GAVESTON *and* Attendants.

K. Edw. I cannot brook these haughty menaces;
Am I a king, and must be overruled?—
Brother, display my ensigns in the field;
I'll bandy with the barons and the earls,
And either die or live with Gaveston.
Gav. I can no longer keep me from my lord.

[*Comes forward.*

K. Edw. What, Gaveston! welcome!—Kiss not my hand—
Embrace me, Gaveston, as I do thee.
Why should'st thou kneel? know'st thou not who I am?
Thy friend, thyself, another Gaveston!
Not Hylas was more mourned of Hercules,
Than thou hast been of me since thy exile.
Gav. And since I went from hence, no soul in hell
Hath felt more torment than poor Gaveston.
K. Edw. I know it.—Brother, welcome home my friend.
Now let the treacherous Mortimers conspire,
And that high-minded Earl of Lancaster:
I have my wish, in that I joy thy sight;
And sooner shall the sea o'erwhelm my land,
Than bear the ship that shall transport thee hence.
I here create thee Lord High Chamberlain,
Chief Secretary to the state and me,
Earl of Cornwall, King and Lord of Man.

Gav. My lord, these titles far exceed my worth.
Kent. Brother, the least of these may well suffice
For one of greater birth than Gaveston.
K. Edw. Cease, brother: for I cannot brook these words.
Thy worth, sweet friend, is far above my gifts,
Therefore, to equal it, receive my heart.
If for these dignities thou be envied,
I'll give thee more; for, but to honour thee,
Is Edward pleased with kingly regiment.
Fear'st thou thy person? thou shalt have a guard:
Wantest thou gold? go to my treasury:
Wouldst thou be loved and feared? receive my seal;
Save or condemn, and in our name command
Whatso thy mind affects, or fancy likes.
Gav. It shall suffice me to enjoy your love,
Which whiles I have, I think myself as great
As Cæsar riding in the Roman street,
With captive kings at his triumphant car.

Enter the BISHOP OF COVENTRY.

K. Edw. Whither goes my lord of Coventry so fast?
B. of Cov. To celebrate your father's exequies.
But is that wicked Gaveston returned?
K. Edw. Ay, priest, and lives to be revenged on thee
That wert the only cause of his exile.
Gav. 'Tis true; and but for reverence of these robes,
Thou should'st not plod one foot beyond this place.
B. of Cov. I did no more than I was bound to do;
And, Gaveston, unless thou be reclaimed,
As then I did incense the parliament,
So will I now, and thou shalt back to France.
Gav. Saving your reverence, you must pardon me.
K. Edw. Throw off his golden mitre, rend his stole,
And in the channel christen him anew.
Kent. Ah, brother, lay not violent hands on him!
For he'll complain unto the see of Rome.
Gav. Let him complain unto the see of hell;

I'll be revenged on him for my exile.
K. Edw. No, spare his life, but seize upon his goods:
Be thou lord bishop and receive his rents,
And make him serve thee as thy chaplain:
I give him thee—here, use him as thou wilt.
Gav. He shall to prison, and there die in bolts.
K. Edw. Ay, to the Tower, the Fleet, or where thou wilt.
B. of Cov. For this offence, be thou accurst of God!
K. Edw. Who's there? Convey this priest to the Tower.
B. of Cov. True, true.
K. Edw. But in the meantime, Gaveston, away,
And take possession of his house and goods.
Come, follow me, and thou shalt have my guard
To see it done, and bring thee safe again.
Gav. What should a priest do with so fair a house?
A prison may best beseem his holiness. [*Exeunt.*

Scene II. *Westminster.*

Enter on one side the two Mortimers; *on the other,* Warwick *and* Lancaster.

War. 'Tis true, the bishop is in the Tower,
And goods and body given to Gaveston.
Lan. What! will they tyrannise upon the church?
Ah, wicked king! accursèd Gaveston!
This ground, which is corrupted with their steps,
Shall be their timeless sepulchre or mine.
Y. Mor. Well, let that peevish Frenchman guard him sure;
Unless his breast be sword-proof he shall die.
E. Mor. How now! why droops the Earl of Lancaster?
Y. Mor. Wherefore is Guy of Warwick discontent?

Lan. That villain Gaveston is made an earl.
E. Mor. An earl!
War. Ay, and besides Lord Chamberlain of the realm,
And Secretary too, and Lord of Man.
E. Mor. We may not, nor we will not suffer this.
Y. Mor. Why post we not from hence to levy men?
Lan. "My Lord of Cornwall," now at every word!
And happy is the man whom he vouchsafes,
For vailing of his bonnet, one good look.
Thus, arm in arm, the king and he doth march:
Nay more, the guard upon his lordship waits;
And all the court begins to flatter him.
War. Thus leaning on the shoulder of the king,
He nods and scorns and smiles at those that pass.
E. Mor. Doth no man take exceptions at the slave?
Lan. All stomach him, but none dare speak a word.
Y. Mor. Ah, that bewrays their baseness, Lancaster!
Were all the earls and barons of my mind,
We'd hale him from the bosom of the king,
And at the court-gate hang the peasant up,
Who, swoln with venom of ambitious pride,
Will be the ruin of the realm and us.
War. Here comes my lord of Canterbury's grace.
Lan. His countenance bewrays he is displeased.

Enter the ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY *and an* Attendant.

A. of Cant. First were his sacred garments rent and torn,
Then laid they violent hands upon him; next
Himself imprisoned, and his goods asseized:
This certify the Pope;—away, take horse.
[*Exit* Attendant.
Lan. My lord, will you take arms against the king?
A. of Cant. What need I? God himself is up in arms,
When violence is offered to the church.

Y. Mor. Then will you join with us, that be his peers,
To banish or behead that Gaveston?
A. of Cant. What else, my lords? for it concerns me near;—
The bishopric of Coventry is his.

Enter QUEEN ISABELLA.

Y. Mor. Madam, whither walks your majesty so fast?
Q. Isab. Unto the forest, gentle Mortimer,
To live in grief and baleful discontent;
For now, my lord, the king regards me not,
But doats upon the love of Gaveston.
He claps his cheeks, and hangs about his neck,
Smiles in his face, and whispers in his ears;
And when I come he frowns, as who should say,
"Go whither thou wilt, seeing I have Gaveston."
E. Mor. Is it not strange that he is thus bewitched?
Y. Mor. Madam, return unto the court again:
That sly inveigling Frenchman we'll exile,
Or lose our lives; and yet, ere that day come,
The king shall lose his crown; for we have power,
And courage too, to be revenged at full.
Q. Isab. But yet lift not your swords against the king.
Lan. No; but we will lift Gaveston from hence.
War. And war must be the means, or he'll stay still.
Q. Isab. Then let him stay; for rather than my lord
Shall be oppressed with civil mutinies,
I will endure a melancholy life,
And let him frolic with his minion.
A. of Cant. My lords, to ease all this, but hear me speak:—
We and the rest, that are his counsellors,
Will meet, and with a general consent
Confirm his banishment with our hands and seals.
Lan. What we confirm the king will frustrate.

Y. Mor. Then may we lawfully revolt from him.
War. But say, my lord, where shall this meeting be?
A. of Cant. At the New Temple.
Y. Mor. Content.
A. of Cant. And, in the meantime, I'll entreat you all
To cross to Lambeth, and there stay with me.
Lan. Come then, let's away.
Y. Mor. Madam, farewell! 80
Q. Isab. Farewell, sweet Mortimer; and for my sake,
Forbear to levy arms against the king.
Y. Mor. Ay, if words will serve; if not, I must.
[*Exeunt.*

Scene III. *London, a Street.*

Enter Gaveston *and* Kent.

Gav. Edmund, the mighty Prince of Lancaster,
That hath more earldoms than an ass can bear,
And both the Mortimers, two goodly men,
With Guy of Warwick, that redoubted knight,
Are gone toward Lambeth—there let them remain.
[*Exeunt.*

Scene IV. *London, the New Temple.*

Enter Lancaster, Warwick, Pembroke, *the* Elder Mortimer, Young Mortimer, *the* Archbishop of Canterbury *and* Attendants.

Lan. Here is the form of Gaveston's exile:
May it please your lordship to subscribe your name.
A. of Cant. Give me the paper.
[*He subscribes, as the others do after him.*

Lan. Quick, quick, my lord; I long to write my name.
War. But I long more to see him banished hence.
Y. Mor. The name of Mortimer shall fright the king,
Unless he be declined from that base peasant.

Enter KING EDWARD, GAVESTON, *and* KENT.

K. Edw. What, are you moved that Gaveston sits here?
It is our pleasure; we will have it so.
Lan. Your grace doth well to place him by your side,
For nowhere else the new earl is so safe.
E. Mor. What man of noble birth can brook this sight?
Quam male conveniunt!
See what a scornful look the peasant casts!
Pem. Can kingly lions fawn on creeping ants?
War. Ignoble vassal, that like Phaeton
Aspir'st unto the guidance of the sun!
Y. Mor. Their downfall is at hand, their forces down:
We will not thus be faced and over-peered.
K. Edw. Lay hands on that traitor Mortimer!
E. Mor. Lay hands on that traitor Gaveston!
Kent. Is this the duty that you owe your king?
War. We know our duties—let him know his peers.
K. Edw. Whither will you bear him? Stay, or ye shall die.
E. Mor. We are no traitors; therefore threaten not.
Gav. No, threaten not, my lord, but pay them home!
Were I a king——
Y. Mor. Thou villain, wherefore talk'st thou of a king,
That hardly art a gentleman by birth?
K. Edw. Were he a peasant, being my minion,
I'll make the proudest of you stoop to him.
Lan. My lord, you may not thus disparage us.—
Away, I say, with hateful Gaveston!

E. Mor. And with the Earl of Kent that favours him. [Attendants *remove* KENT *and* GAVESTON.

K. Edw. Nay, then, lay violent hands upon your king,
Here, Mortimer, sit thou in Edward's throne:
Warwick and Lancaster, wear you my crown:
Was ever king thus over-ruled as I?

Lan. Learn then to rule us better, and the realm.

Y. Mor. What we have done, our heart-blood shall maintain.

War. Think you that we can brook this upstart pride?

K. Edw. Anger and wrathful fury stops my speech.

A. of Cant. Why are you moved? be patient, my lord,
And see what we your counsellors have done.

Y. Mor. My lords, now let us all be resolute,
And either have our wills, or lose our lives.

K. Edw. Meet you for this, proud overbearing peers?
Ere my sweet Gaveston shall part from me,
This isle shall fleet upon the ocean,
And wander to the unfrequented Inde.

A. of Cant. You know that I am legate to the Pope;
On your allegiance to the see of Rome,
Subscribe, as we have done, to his exile.

Y. Mor. Curse him, if he refuse; and then may we
Depose him and elect another king.

K. Edw. Ay, there it goes! but yet I will not yield:
Curse me, depose me, do the worst you can.

Lan. Then linger not, my lord, but do it straight.

A. of Cant. Remember how the bishop was abused!
Either banish him that was the cause thereof,
Or I will presently discharge these lords
Of duty and allegiance due to thee.

K. Edw. It boots me not to threat—I must speak fair:
The legate of the Pope will be obeyed. [*Aside.*
My lord, you shall be Chancellor of the realm;

Thou, Lancaster, High Admiral of our fleet;
Young Mortimer and his uncle shall be earls;
And you, Lord Warwick, President of the North;
And thou of Wales. If this content you not,
Make several kingdoms of this monarchy,
And share it equally amongst you all,
So I may have some nook or corner left,
To frolic with my dearest Gaveston.

A. of Cant. Nothing shall alter us—we are resolved.

Lan. Come, come, subscribe.

Y. Mor. Why should you love him whom the world hates so?

K. Edw. Because he loves me more than all the world.

Ah, none but rude and savage-minded men
Would seek the ruin of my Gaveston;
You that be noble-born should pity him.

War. You that are princely-born should shake him off:
For shame subscribe, and let the lown depart.

E. Mor. Urge him, my lord.

A. of Cant. Are you content to banish him the realm?

K. Edw. I see I must, and therefore am content:
Instead of ink I'll write it with my tears.

[*Subscribes.*

Y. Mor. The king is love-sick for his minion.

K. Edw. 'Tis done—and now, accursèd hand, fall off!

Lan. Give it me—I'll have it published in the streets.

Y. Mor. I'll see him presently despatched away.

A. of Cant. Now is my heart at ease.

War. And so is mine.

Pem. This will be good news to the common sort.

E. Mor. Be it or no, he shall not linger here.

[*Exeunt all except* KING EDWARD.

K. Edw. How fast they run to banish him I love!
They would not stir, were it to do me good.

Why should a king be subject to a priest?
Proud Rome! that hatchest such imperial grooms,
For these thy superstitious taper-lights,
Wherewith thy antichristian churches blaze,
I'll fire thy crazèd buildings, and enforce
The papal towers to kiss the lowly ground!
With slaughtered priests make Tiber's channel swell,
And banks raised higher with their sepulchres!
As for the peers, that back the clergy thus,
If I be king, not one of them shall live.

Re-enter GAVESTON.

Gav. My lord, I hear it whispered everywhere,
That I am banished, and must fly the land.
K. Edw. 'Tis true, sweet Gaveston—O! were it false!
The legate of the Pope will have it so,
And thou must hence, or I shall be deposed.
But I will reign to be revenged of them;
And therefore, sweet friend, take it patiently.
Live where thou wilt, I'll send thee gold enough;
And long thou shalt not stay, or if thou dost,
I'll come to thee; my love shall ne'er decline.
Gav. Is all my hope turned to this hell of grief?
K. Edw. Rend not my heart with thy too-piercing words:
Thou from this land, I from myself am banished.
Gav. To go from hence grieves not poor Gaveston;
But to forsake you, in whose gracious looks
The blessedness of Gaveston remains:
For nowhere else seeks he felicity.
K. Edw. And only this torments my wretched soul
That, whether I will or no, thou must depart.
Be governor of Ireland in my stead,
And there abide till fortune call thee home.
Here take my picture, and let me wear thine;
[*They exchange pictures.*

O, might I keep thee here as I do this,
Happy were I! but now most miserable!
Gav. 'Tis something to be pitied of a king.
K. Edw. Thou shalt not hence—I'll hide thee, Gaveston.
Gav. I shall be found, and then 'twill grieve me more.
K. Edw. Kind words and mutual talk makes our grief greater:
Therefore, with dumb embracement, let us part.
Stay, Gaveston, I cannot leave thee thus.
Gav. For every look, my lord, drops down a tear:
Seeing I must go, do not renew my sorrow.
K. Edw. The time is little that thou hast to stay,
And, therefore, give me leave to look my fill:
But come, sweet friend, I'll bear thee on thy way.
Gav. The peers will frown.
K. Edw. I pass not for their anger—Come, let's go
O, that we might as well return as go.

Enter QUEEN ISABELLA.

Q. Isab. Whither goes my lord?
K. Edw. Fawn not on me, French strumpet! get thee gone!
Q. Isab. On whom but on my husband should I fawn?
Gav. On Mortimer! with whom, ungentle queen—
I say no more—judge you the rest, my lord.
Q. Isab. In saying this, thou wrong'st me, Gaveston;
Is 't not enough that thou corrupt'st my lord,
And art a bawd to his affections,
But thou must call mine honour thus in question?
Gav. I mean not so; your grace must pardon me.
K. Edw. Thou art too familiar with that Mortimer,
And by thy means is Gaveston exiled;
But I would wish thee reconcile the lord
Or thou shalt ne'er be reconciled to me.
Q. Isab. Your highness knows it lies not in my power.

K. Edw. Away then! touch me not—Come, Gaveston.
Q. Isab. Villain! 'tis thou that robb'st me of my lord.
Gav. Madam, 'tis you that rob me of my lord.
K. Edw. Speak not unto her; let her droop and pine.
Q. Isab. Wherein, my lord, have I deserved these words?
Witness the tears that Isabella sheds,
Witness this heart, that, sighing for thee, breaks,
How dear my lord is to poor Isabel.
K. Edw. And witness Heaven how dear thou art to me:
There weep: for till my Gaveston be repealed,
Assure thyself thou com'st not in my sight.
[*Exeunt* EDWARD *and* GAVESTON.
Q. Isab. O miserable and distressèd queen!
Would, when I left sweet France and was embarked,
That charming Circe, walking on the waves,
Had changed my shape, or at the marriage-day
The cup of Hymen had been full of poison,
Or with those arms that twined about my neck
I had been stifled, and not lived to see
The king my lord thus to abandon me!
Like frantic Juno will I fill the earth
With ghastly murmur of my sighs and cries;
For never doated Jove on Ganymede
So much as he on cursèd Gaveston:
But that will more exasperate his wrath;
I must entreat him, I must speak him fair;
And be a means to call home Gaveston:
And yet he'll ever doat on Gaveston;
And so am I for ever miserable.

Re-enter LANCASTER, WARWICK, PEMBROKE, *the* ELDER MORTIMER, *and* YOUNG MORTIMER.

Lan. Look where the sister of the King of France
Sits wringing of her hands, and beats her breast!

War. The king, I fear, hath ill-entreated her.
Pem. Hard is the heart that injures such a saint.
Y. Mor. I know 'tis 'long of Gaveston she weeps.
E. Mor. Why, he is gone.
Y. Mor. Madam, how fares your grace?
Q. Isab. Ah, Mortimer! now breaks the king's hate forth,
And he confesseth that he loves me not.
Y. Mor. Cry quittance, madam, then; and love not him.
Q. Isab. No, rather will I die a thousand deaths:
And yet I love in vain;—he'll ne'er love me.
Lan. Fear ye not, madam; now his minion's gone,
His wanton humour will be quickly left.
Q. Isab. O never, Lancaster! I am enjoined
To sue upon you all for his repeal;
This wills my lord, and this must I perform,
Or else be banished from his highness' presence.
Lan. For his repeal, madam! he comes not back,
Unless the sea cast up his shipwrecked body.
War. And to behold so sweet a sight as that,
There's none here but would run his horse to death.
Y. Mor. But, madam, would you have us call him home?
Q. Isab. Ay, Mortimer, for till he be restored,
The angry king hath banished me the court;
And therefore, as thou lov'st and tender'st me,
Be thou my advocate unto these peers.
Y. Mor. What! would you have me plead for Gaveston?
E. Mor. Plead for him that will, I am resolved.
Lan. And so am I, my lord: dissuade the queen.
Q. Isab. O Lancaster! let him dissuade the king,
For 'tis against my will he should return.
War. Then speak not for him, let the peasant go.
Q. Isab. 'Tis for myself I speak, and not for him.
Pem. No speaking will prevail, and therefore cease.
Y. Mor. Fair queen, forbear to angle for the fish

Which, being caught, strikes him that takes it dead;
I mean that vile torpedo, Gaveston,
That now, I hope, floats on the Irish seas.
Q. Isab. Sweet Mortimer, sit down by me awhile,
And I will tell thee reasons of such weight
As thou wilt soon subscribe to his repeal.
Y. Mor. It is impossible; but speak your mind.
Q. Isab. Then thus;—but none shall hear it but ourselves.

[*Talks to* YOUNG MORTIMER *apart.*

Lan. My lords, albeit the queen win Mortimer,
Will you be resolute, and hold with me?
E. Mor. Not I, against my nephew.
Pem. Fear not, the queen's words cannot alter him.
War. No? do but mark how earnestly she pleads!
Lan. And see how coldly his looks make denial!
War. She smiles; now for my life his mind is changed!
Lan. I'll rather lose his friendship, I, than grant.
Y. Mor. Well, of necessity it must be so.
My lords, that I abhor base Gaveston,
I hope your honours make no question,
And therefore, though I plead for his repeal,
'Tis not for his sake, but for our avail;
Nay for the realm's behoof, and for the king's.
Lan. Fie, Mortimer, dishonour not thyself!
Can this be true, 'twas good to banish him?
And is this true, to call him home again?
Such reasons make white black, and dark night day.
Y. Mor. My lord of Lancaster, mark the respect.
Lan. In no respect can contraries be true.
Q. Isab. Yet, good my lord, hear what he can allege.
War. All that he speaks is nothing; we are resolved.
Y. Mor. Do you not wish that Gaveston were dead?
Pem. I would he were!
Y. Mor. Why then, my lord, give me but leave to speak.

E. Mor. But, nephew, do not play the sophister.
Y. Mor. This which I urge is of a burning zeal
To mend the king, and do our country good.
Know you not Gaveston hath store of gold,
Which may in Ireland purchase him such friends
As he will front the mightiest of us all?
And whereas he shall live and be beloved,
'Tis hard for us to work his overthrow.
War. Mark you but that, my lord of Lancaster.
Y. Mor. But were he here, detested as he is,
How easily might some base slave be suborned
To greet his lordship with a poniard,
And none so much as blame the murderer,
But rather praise him for that brave attempt,
And in the chronicle enrol his name
For purging of the realm of such a plague!
Pem. He saith true.
Lan. Ay, but how chance this was not done before?
Y. Mor. Because, my lords, it was not thought upon.
Nay, more, when he shall know it lies in us
To banish him and then to call him home,
'Twill make him vail the top-flag of his pride,
And fear to offend the meanest nobleman.
E. Mor. But how if he do not, nephew?
Y. Mor. Then may we with some colour rise in arms;
For howsoever we have borne it out,
'Tis treason to be up against the king;
So we shall have the people of our side,
Which for his father's sake lean to the king,
But cannot brook a night-grown mushroom,
Such a one as my lord of Cornwall is,
Should bear us down of the nobility.
And when the commons and the nobles join,
'Tis not the king can buckler Gaveston;
We'll pull him from the strongest hold he hath.
My lords, if to perform this I be slack,
Think me as base a groom as Gaveston.
Lan. On that condition, Lancaster will grant.

War. And so will Pembroke, and I.
E. Mor. And I.
Y. Mor. In this I count me highly gratified,
And Mortimer will rest at your command.
Q. Isab. And when this favour Isabel forgets,
Then let her live abandoned and forlorn.—
But see, in happy time, my lord the king,
Having brought the Earl of Cornwall on his way,
Is new returned; this news will glad him much;
Yet not so much as me; I love him more
Than he can Gaveston; would he love me
But half so much, then were I treble-blessed!

Re-enter KING EDWARD, *mourning.*

K. Edw. He's gone, and for his absence thus I mourn.
Did never sorrow go so near my heart
As doth the want of my sweet Gaveston;
And could my crown's revenue bring him back,
I would freely give it to his enemies,
And think I gained, having bought so dear a friend.
Q. Isab. Hark! how he harps upon his minion.
K. Edw. My heart is as an anvil unto sorrow,
Which beats upon it like the Cyclops' hammers,
And with the noise turns up my giddy brain,
And makes me frantic for my Gaveston.
Ah! had some bloodless Fury rose from hell,
And with my kingly sceptre struck me dead,
When I was forced to leave my Gaveston!
Lan. Diablo! What passions call you these?
Q. Isab. My gracious lord, I come to bring you news.
K. Edw. That you have parled with your Mortimer!
Q. Isab. That Gaveston, my lord, shall be repealed.
K. Edw. Repealed! the news is too sweet to be true?
Q. Isab. But will you love me, if you find it so?
K. Edw. If it be so, what will not Edward do?
Q. Isab. For Gaveston, but not for Isabel.

K. Edw. For thee, fair queen, if thou lov'st Gaveston ;
I'll hang a golden tongue about thy neck,
Seeing thou hast pleaded with so good success.
Q. Isab. No other jewels hang about my neck
Than these, my lord ; nor let me have more wealth
Than I may fetch from this rich treasury—
O how a kiss revives poor Isabel !
K. Edw. Once more receive my hand ; and let this be
A second marriage 'twixt thyself and me.
Q. Isab. And may it prove more happy than the first !
My gentle lord, bespeak these nobles fair,
That wait attendance for a gracious look,
And on their knees salute your majesty.
K. Edw. Courageous Lancaster, embrace thy king !
And, as gross vapours perish by the sun,
Even so let hatred with thy sovereign's smile.
Live thou with me as my companion.
Lan. This salutation overjoys my heart.
K. Edw. Warwick shall be my chiefest counsellor :
These silver hairs will more adorn my court
Than gaudy silks, or rich embroidery.
Chide me, sweet Warwick, if I go astray.
War. Slay me, my lord, when I offend your grace.
K. Edw. In solemn triumphs, and in public shows,
Pembroke shall bear the sword before the king.
Pem. And with this sword Pembroke will fight for you.
K. Edw. But wherefore walks young Mortimer aside ?
Be thou commander of our royal fleet ?
Or, if that lofty office like thee not,
I make thee here Lord Marshal of the realm.
Y. Mor. My lord, I'll marshal so your enemies,
As England shall be quiet, and you safe.
K. Edw. And as for you, Lord Mortimer of Chirke,
Whose great achievements in our foreign war
Deserves no common place, nor mean reward ;
Be you the general of the levied troops,
That now are ready to assail the Scots.

E. Mor. In this your grace hath highly honoured me,
For with my nature war doth best agree.
Q. Isab. Now is the King of England rich and strong,
Having the love of his renownèd peers.
K. Edw. Ay, Isabel, ne'er was my heart so light.
Clerk of the crown, direct our warrant forth
For Gaveston to Ireland:

Enter BEAUMONT *with warrant.*

Beaumont, fly
As fast as Iris or Jove's Mercury.
Bea. It shall be done, my gracious lord. [*Exit.*
K. Edw. Lord Mortimer, we leave you to your charge.
Now let us in, and feast it royally.
Against our friend the Earl of Cornwall comes,
We'll have a general tilt and tournament;
And then his marriage shall be solemnised.
For wot you not that I have made him sure
Unto our cousin, the Earl of Gloucester's heir?
Lan. Such news we hear, my lord.
K. Edw. That day, if not for him, yet for my sake,
Who in the triumph will be challenger,
Spare for no cost; we will requite your love.
War. In this or aught your highness shall command us.
K. Edw. Thanks, gentle Warwick: come, let's in and revel. [*Exeunt all except the* MORTIMERS.
E. Mor. Nephew, I must to Scotland; thou stayest here.
Leave now t' oppose thyself against the king.
Thou seest by nature he is mild and calm,
And, seeing his mind so doats on Gaveston,
Let him without controlment have his will.
The mightiest kings have had their minions:
Great Alexander loved Hephestion;
The conquering Hercules for Hylas wept;
And for Patroclus stern Achilles drooped.
And not kings only, but the wisest men:

The Roman Tully loved Octavius;
Grave Socrates, wild Alcibiades.
Then let his grace, whose youth is flexible,
And promiseth as much as we can wish,
Freely enjoy that vain, light-headed earl;
For riper years will wean him from such toys.
Y. Mor. Uncle, his wanton humour grieves not me;
But this I scorn, that one so basely born
Should by his sovereign's favour grow so pert,
And riot it with the treasure of the realm.
While soldiers mutiny for want of pay,
He wears a lord's revenue on his back,
And, Midas-like, he jets it in the court,
With base outlandish cullions at his heels,
Whose proud fantastic liveries make such show,
As if that Proteus, god of shapes, appeared.
I have not seen a dapper Jack so brisk;
He wears a short Italian hooded cloak,
Larded with pearl, and, in his Tuscan cap,
A jewel of more value than the crown.
While others walk below, the king and he
From out a window laugh at such as we,
And flout our train, and jest at our attire.
Uncle, 'tis this makes me impatient.
E. Mor. But, nephew, now you see the king is changed.
Y. Mor. Then so am I, and live to do him service:
But whiles I have a sword, a hand, a heart,
I will not yield to any such upstart.
You know my mind; come, uncle, let's away.
[*Exeunt.*

ACT II.

SCENE I. *A hall in the Earl of Gloucester's house.*

Enter YOUNG SPENCER *and* BALDOCK.

Bald. Spencer,
Seeing that our lord the Earl of Gloucester's dead,
Which of the nobles dost thou mean to serve?
Y. Spen. Not Mortimer, nor any of his side;
Because the king and he are enemies.
Baldock, learn this of me, a factious lord
Shall hardly do himself good, much less us;
But he that hath the favour of a king,
May with one word advance us while we live:
The liberal Earl of Cornwall is the man
On whose good fortune Spencer's hope depends.
Bald. What, mean you then to be his follower?
Y. Spen. No, his companion; for he loves me well,
And would have once preferred me to the king.
Bald. But he is banished; there's small hope of him.
Y. Spen. Ay, for a while; but, Baldock, mark the end.
A friend of mine told me in secrecy
That he's repealed, and sent for back again;
And even now a post came from the court
With letters to our lady from the king;
And as she read she smiled, which makes me think
It is about her lover Gaveston.
Bald. 'Tis like enough; for since he was exiled

She neither walks abroad, nor comes in sight.
But I had thought the match had been broke off,
And that his banishment had changed her mind.
Y. Spen. Our lady's first love is not wavering;
My life for thine, she will have Gaveston.
Bald. Then hope I by her means to be preferred,
Having read unto her since she was a child.
Y. Spen. Then, Baldock, you must cast the scholar off,
And learn to court it like a gentleman.
'Tis not a black coat and a little band,
A velvet-caped coat, faced before with serge,
And smelling to a nosegay all the day,
Or holding of a napkin in your hand,
Or saying a long grace at a table's end,
Or making low legs to a nobleman,
Or looking downward with your eyelids close,
And saying, "Truly, an't may please your honour,"
Can get you any favour with great men;
You must be proud, bold, pleasant, resolute,
And now and then stab, as occasion serves.
Bald. Spencer, thou know'st I hate such formal toys,
And use them but of mere hypocrisy.
Mine old lord whiles he lived was so precise,
That he would take exceptions at my buttons,
And being like pin's heads, blame me for the bigness;
Which made me curate-like in my attire,
Though inwardly licentious enough,
And apt for any kind of villainy.
I am none of these common pedants, I,
That cannot speak without *propterea quod.*
Y. Spen. But one of those that saith, *quandoquidem,*
And hath a special gift to form a verb.
Bald. Leave off this jesting, here my lady comes

Enter KING EDWARD'S NIECE.

Niece. The grief for his exile was not so much,
As is the joy of his returning home.

This letter came from my sweet Gaveston:
What need'st thou, love, thus to excuse thyself?
I know thou could'st not come and visit me:
[*Reads.*] "*I will not long be from thee, though I die.*"
This argues the entire love of my lord;
[*Reads.*] "*When I forsake thee, death seize on my heart*":
But stay thee here where Gaveston shall sleep.
[*Puts the letter into her bosom.*
Now to the letter of my lord the king.—
He wills me to repair unto the court,
And meet my Gaveston: why do I stay,
Seeing that he talks thus of my marriage-day?
Who's there? Baldock!
See that my coach be ready, I must hence.
Bald. It shall be done, madam. [*Exit* BALDOCK.
Niece. And meet me at the park-pale presently.
Spencer, stay you and bear me company,
For I have joyful news to tell thee of;
My lord of Cornwall is a-coming over,
And will be at the court as soon as we.
Y. Spen. I knew the king would have him home again.
Niece. If all things sort out as I hope they will,
Thy service, Spencer, shall be thought upon.
Y. Spen. I humbly thank your ladyship.
Niece. Come, lead the way; I long till I am there.
[*Exeunt.*

SCENE II. *Before Tynemouth Castle.*

Enter KING EDWARD, QUEEN ISABELLA, KENT, LANCASTER, YOUNG MORTIMER, WARWICK, PEMBROKE, *and* Attendants.

K. Edw. The wind is good, I wonder why he stays;
I fear me he is wrecked upon the sea.
Q. Isab. Look, Lancaster, how passionate he is,
And still his mind runs on his minion!

Lan. My lord,—
K. Edw. How now! what news? is Gaveston arrived?
Y. Mor. Nothing but Gaveston! what means your grace?
You have matters of more weight to think upon;
The King of France sets foot in Normandy.
K. Edw. A trifle! we'll expel him when we please.
But tell me, Mortimer, what's thy device
Against the stately triumph we decreed?
Y. Mor. A homely one, my lord, not worth the telling.
K. Edw. Pray thee let me know it.
Y. Mor. But, seeing you are so desirous, thus it is:
A lofty cedar-tree, fair flourishing,
On whose top-branches kingly eagles perch,
And by the bark a canker creeps me up,
And gets into the highest bough of all:
The motto, *Æque tandem.*
K. Edw. And what is yours, my lord of Lancaster?
Lan. My lord, mine's more obscure than Mortimer's.
Pliny reports there is a flying fish
Which all the other fishes deadly hate,
And therefore, being pursued, it takes the air:
No sooner is it up, but there's a fowl
That seizeth it; this fish, my lord, I bear,
The motto this: *Undique mors est.*
Kent. Proud Mortimer! ungentle Lancaster!
Is this the love you bear your sovereign?
Is this the fruit your reconcilement bears?
Can you in words make show of amity,
And in your shields display your rancorous minds!
What call you this but private libelling
Against the Earl of Cornwall and my brother?
Q. Isab. Sweet husband, be content, they all love you.
K. Edw. They love me not that hate my Gaveston.
I am that cedar; shake me not too much;
And you the eagles; soar ye ne'er so high.

I have the jesses that will pull you down;
And *Æque tandem* shall that canker cry
Unto the proudest peer of Britainy.
Though thou compar'st him to a flying fish,
And threatenest death whether he rise or fall,
'Tis not the hugest monster of the sea,
Nor foulest harpy that shall swallow him.

Y. Mor. If in his absence thus he favours him,
What will he do whenas he shall be present?

Lan. That shall we see; look where his lordship comes.

Enter GAVESTON.

K. Edw. My Gaveston!
Welcome to Tynemouth! welcome to thy friend!
Thy absence made me droop and pine away;
For, as the lovers of fair Danae,
When she was locked up in a brazen tower,
Desired her more, and waxed outrageous,
So did it fare with me: and now thy sight
Is sweeter far than was thy parting hence
Bitter and irksome to my sobbing heart.

Gav. Sweet lord and king, your speech preventeth mine,
Yet have I words left to express my joy:
The shepherd nipt with biting winter's rage
Frolics not more to see the painted spring,
Than I do to behold your majesty.

K. Edw. Will none of you salute my Gaveston?

Lan. Salute him? yes; welcome, Lord Chamberlain!

Y. Mor. Welcome is the good Earl of Cornwall!

War. Welcome, Lord Governor of the Isle of Man!

Pem. Welcome, Master Secretary!

Kent. Brother, do you hear them?

K. Edw. Still will these earls and barons use me thus.

Gav. My lord, I cannot brook these injuries.

Q. Isab. Ay me, poor soul, when these begin to jar.
[*Aside.*

K. Edw. Return it to their throats, I'll be thy warrant.

Gav. Base, leaden earls, that glory in your birth,
Go sit at home and eat your tenants' beef;
And come not here to scoff at Gaveston,
Whose mounting thoughts did never creep so low
As to bestow a look on such as you.

Lan. Yet I disdain not to do this for you.

[*Draws his sword, and offers to stab* GAVESTON.

K. Edw. Treason! treason! where's the traitor?

Pem. Here! here!

K. Edw. Convey hence Gaveston; they'll murder him.

Gav. The life of thee shall salve this foul disgrace.

Y. Mor. Villain! thy life, unless I miss mine aim.

[*Wounds* GAVESTON.

Q. Isab. Ah! furious Mortimer, what hast thou done?

Y. Mor. No more than I would answer, were he slain.

[*Exeunt* GAVESTON *and* Attendants.

K. Edw. Yes, more than thou canst answer, though he live;
Dear shall you both abide this riotous deed.
Out of my presence! come not near the court.

Y. Mor. I'll not be barred the court for Gaveston.

Lan. We'll hale him by the ears unto the block.

K. Edw. Look to your own heads; his is sure enough.

War. Look to your own crown, if you back him thus.

Kent. Warwick, these words do ill beseem thy years.

K. Edw. Nay, all of them conspire to cross me thus;
But if I live, I'll tread upon their heads
That think with high looks thus to tread me down.
Come, Edmund, let's away and levy men;
'Tis war that must abate these barons' pride.

[*Exeunt* KING EDWARD, QUEEN ISABELLA, *and* KENT.

War. Let's to our castles, for the king is moved.

Y. Mor. Moved may he be, and perish in his wrath!
Lan. Cousin, it is no dealing with him now,
He means to make us stoop by force of arms:
And therefore let us jointly here protest,
To prosecute that Gaveston to the death.
Y. Mor. By heaven, the abject villain shall not live!
War. I'll have his blood, or die in seeking it.
Pem. The like oath Pembroke takes.
Lan. And so doth Lancaster.
Now send our heralds to defy the king;
And make the people swear to put him down.

Enter a Messenger.

Y. Mor. Letters! from whence?
Mess. From Scotland, my lord.
[*Giving letters to* MORTIMER.
Lan. Why, how now, cousin, how fares all our friends?
Y. Mor. My uncle's taken prisoner by the Scots.
Lan. We'll have him ransomed, man; be of good cheer.
Y. Mor. They rate his ransom at five thousand pound.
Who should defray the money but the king,
Seeing he is taken prisoner in his wars?
I'll to the king.
Lan. Do, cousin, and I'll bear thee company.
War. Meantime, my lord of Pembroke and myself
Will to Newcastle here, and gather head.
Y. Mor. About it then, and we will follow you.
Lan. Be resolute and full of secrecy.
War. I warrant you. [*Exit with* PEMBROKE
Y. Mor. Cousin, and if he will not ransom him,
I'll thunder such a peal into his ears,
As never subject did unto his king.
Lan. Content, I'll bear my part—Holla! who's there?

Enter Guard.

Y. Mor. Ay, marry, such a guard as this doth well.
Lan. Lead on the way.
Guard. Whither will your lordships?
Y. Mor. Whither else but to the king.
Guard. His highness is disposed to be alone.
Lan. Why, so he may, but we will speak to him.
Guard. You may not in, my lord.
Y. Mor. May we not?

Enter KING EDWARD *and* KENT.

K. Edw. How now!
What noise is this? who have we there, is 't you?
[*Going.*
Y. Mor. Nay, stay, my lord, I come to bring you news;
Mine uncle's taken prisoner by the Scots.
K. Edw. Then ransom him.
Lan. 'Twas in your wars; you should ransom him.
Y. Mor. And you shall ransom him, or else——
Kent. What! Mortimer, you will not threaten him?
K. Edw. Quiet yourself, you shall have the broad seal,
To gather for him throughout the realm.
Lan. Your minion Gaveston hath taught you this.
Y. Mor. My lord, the family of the Mortimers
Are not so poor, but, would they sell their land,
'Twould levy men enough to anger you.
We never beg, but use such prayers as these.
K. Edw. Shall I still be haunted thus?
Y. Mor. Nay, now you're here alone, I'll speak my mind.
Lan. And so will I, and then, my lord, farewell.
Y. Mor. The idle triumphs, masks, lascivious shows,
And prodigal gifts bestowed on Gaveston,
Have drawn thy treasury dry, and made thee weak;
The murmuring commons, overstretchèd, break.

Lan. Look for rebellion, look to be deposed;
Thy garrisons are beaten out of France,
And, lame and poor, lie groaning at the gates.
The wild Oneyl, with swarms of Irish kerns,
Lives uncontrolled within the English pale.
Unto the walls of York the Scots make road,
And unresisted drive away rich spoils.
Y. Mor. The haughty Dane commands the narrow seas,
While in the harbour ride thy ships unrigged.
Lan. What foreign prince sends thee ambassadors?
Y. Mor. Who loves thee, but a sort of flatterers?
Lan. Thy gentle queen, sole sister to Valois,
Complains that thou hast left her all forlorn.
Y. Mor. Thy court is naked, being bereft of those
That make a king seem glorious to the world;
I mean the peers, whom thou should'st dearly love:
Libels are cast again thee in the street:
Ballads and rhymes made of thy overthrow.
Lan. The Northern borderers seeing their houses burnt,
Their wives and children slain, run up and down,
Cursing the name of thee and Gaveston.
Y. Mor. When wert thou in the field with banner spread,
But once? and then thy soldiers marched like players,
With garish robes, not armour; and thyself,
Bedaubed with gold, rode laughing at the rest,
Nodding and shaking of thy spangled crest,
Where women's favours hung like labels down.
Lan. And therefore came it, that the fleering Scots,
To England's high disgrace, have made this jig:
"Maids of England, sore may you mourn,—
For your lemans you have lost at Bannocksbourn,
With a heave and a ho!
What weeneth the King of England,
So soon to have won Scotland?
With a rombelow!"

Y. Mor. Wigmore shall fly, to set my uncle free.
Lan. And when 'tis gone, our swords shall purchase more.
If ye be moved, revenge it as you can;
Look next to see us with our ensigns spread.
[*Exit with* YOUNG MORTIMER.
K. Edw. My swelling heart for very anger breaks!
How oft have I been baited by these peers,
And dare not be revenged, for their power is great!
Yet, shall the crowing of these cockerels
Affright a lion? Edward, unfold thy paws,
And let their lives' blood slake thy fury's hunger.
If I be cruel and grow tyrannous,
Now let them thank themselves, and rue too late.
Kent. My lord, I see your love to Gaveston
Will be the ruin of the realm and you,
For now the wrathful nobles threaten wars,
And therefore, brother, banish him for ever.
K. Edw. Art thou an enemy to my Gaveston?
Kent. Ay, and it grieves me that I favoured him.
K. Edw. Traitor, begone! whine thou with Mortimer.
Kent. So will I, rather than with Gaveston.
K. Edw. Out of my sight, and trouble me no more!
Kent. No marvel though thou scorn thy noble peers,
When I thy brother am rejected thus.
K. Edw. Away! [*Exit* KENT.
Poor Gaveston, that has no friend but me,
Do what they can, we'll live in Tynemouth here,
And, so I walk with him about the walls,
What care I though the earls begirt us round?—
Here cometh she that's cause of all these jars.

Enter QUEEN ISABELLA *with* KING EDWARD'S NIECE, *two* Ladies, GAVESTON, BALDOCK *and* YOUNG SPENCER.

Q. Isab. My lord, 'tis thought the earls are up in arms.
K. Edw. Ay, and 'tis likewise thought you favour 'em.

Q. Isab. Thus do you still suspect me without cause ?
Niece. Sweet uncle ! speak more kindly to the queen.
Gav. My lord, dissemble with her, speak her fair.
K. Edw. Pardon me, sweet, I forgot myself.
Q. Isab. Your pardon is quickly got of Isabel.
K. Edw. The younger Mortimer is grown so brave,
That to my face he threatens civil wars.
Gav. Why do you not commit him to the Tower ?
K. Edw. I dare not, for the people love him well.
Gav. Why, then we'll have him privily made away.
K. Edw. Would Lancaster and he had both caroused
A bowl of poison to each other's health !
But let them go, and tell me what are these.
Niece. Two of my father's servants whilst he liv'd,—
May 't please your grace to entertain them now.
K. Edw. Tell me, where wast thou born ? what is thine arms ?
Bald. My name is Baldock, and my gentry
I fetch from Oxford, not from heraldry.
K. Edw. The fitter art thou, Baldock, for my turn.
Wait on me, and I'll see thou shall not want.
Bald. I humbly thank your majesty.
K. Edw. Knowest thou him, Gaveston ?
Gav. Ay, my lord ;
His name is Spencer, he is well allied ;
For my sake, let him wait upon your grace ;
Scarce shall you find a man of more desert.
K. Edw. Then, Spencer, wait upon me ; for his sake
I'll grace thee with a higher style ere long.
Y. Spen. No greater titles happen unto me,
Than to be favoured of your majesty !
K. Edw. Cousin, this day shall be your marriage-feast.
And, Gaveston, think that I love thee well,
To wed thee to our niece, the only heir
Unto the Earl of Gloucester late deceased.
Gav. I know, my lord, many will stomach me,
But I respect neither their love nor hate.

K. Edw. The headstrong barons shall not limit me;
He that I list to favour shall be great.
Come, let's away; and when the marriage ends,
Have at the rebels, and their complices! [*Exeunt.*

Scene III. *The neighbourhood of Tynemouth Castle.*

Enter Kent, Lancaster, Young Mortimer, Warwick, Pembroke, *and others.*

Kent. My lords, of love to this our native land
I come to join with you and leave the king;
And in your quarrel and the realm's behoof
Will be the first that shall adventure life.
Lan. I fear me, you are sent of policy,
To undermine us with a show of love.
War. He is your brother, therefore have we cause
To cast the worst, and doubt of your revolt.
Kent. Mine honour shall be hostage of my truth:
If that will not suffice, farewell, my lords.
Y. Mor. Stay, Edmund; never was Plantagenet
False of his word, and therefore trust we thee.
Pem. But what's the reason you should leave him now?
Kent. I have informed the Earl of Lancaster.
Lan. And it sufficeth. Now, my lords, know this,
That Gaveston is secretly arrived,
And here in Tynemouth frolics with the king.
Let us with these our followers scale the walls,
And suddenly surprise them unawares.
Y. Mor. I'll give the onset.
War. And I'll follow thee.
Y. Mor. This tottered ensign of my ancestors,
Which swept the desert shore of that dead sea
Whereof we got the name of Mortimer,
Will I advance upon this castle's walls.

Drums, strike alarum, raise them from their sport,
And ring aloud the knell of Gaveston!
Lan. None be so hardy as to touch the king;
But neither spare you Gaveston nor his friends.
[*Exeunt.*

Scene IV. *In Tynemouth Castle.*

Enter, severally, King Edward *and* Young Spencer.

K. Edw. O tell me, Spencer, where is Gaveston?
Spen. I fear me he is slain, my gracious lord.
K. Edw. No, here he comes; now let them spoil and kill.

Enter Queen Isabella, King Edward's Niece, Gaveston, *and* Nobles.

Fly, fly, my lords, the earls have got the hold;
Take shipping and away to Scarborough;
Spencer and I will post away by land.
Gav. O stay, my lord, they will not injure you.
K. Edw. I will not trust them; Gaveston, away!
Gav. Farewell, my lord.
K. Edw. Lady, farewell.
Niece. Farewell, sweet uncle, till we meet again.
K. Edw. Farewell, sweet Gaveston; and farewell, niece.
Q. Isab. No farewell to poor Isabel thy queen?
K. Edw. Yes, yes, for Mortimer, your lover's sake.
Q. Isab. Heaven can witness I love none but you:
[*Exeunt all but* Queen Isabella.
From my embracements thus he breaks away.
O that mine arms could close this isle about,
That I might pull him to me where I would!
Or that these tears, that drizzle from mine eyes,
Had power to mollify his stony heart,
That when I had him we might never part.

Enter LANCASTER, WARWICK, YOUNG MORTIMER, *and others. Alarums within.*

Lan. I wonder how he scaped!
Y. Mor. Who's this? the queen!
Q. Isab. Ay, Mortimer, the miserable queen,
Whose pining heart her inward sighs have blasted,
And body with continual mourning wasted;
These hands are tired with haling of my lord
From Gaveston, from wicked Gaveston,
And all in vain; for, when I speak him fair,
He turns away, and smiles upon his minion.
Y. Mor. Cease to lament, and tell us where's the king?
Q. Isab. What would you with the king? is 't him you seek?
Lan. No, madam, but that cursèd Gaveston.
Far be it from the thought of Lancaster
To offer violence to his sovereign.
We would but rid the realm of Gaveston:
Tell us where he remains, and he shall die.
Q. Isab. He's gone by water unto Scarborough;
Pursue him quickly, and he cannot scape;
The king hath left him, and his train is small.
War. Foreslow no time, sweet Lancaster; let's march.
Y. Mor. How comes it that the king and he is parted?
Q. Isab. That thus your army, going several ways,
Might be of lesser force: and with the power
That he intendeth presently to raise,
Be easily suppressed; therefore be gone.
Y. Mor. Here in the river rides a Flemish hoy;
Let's all aboard, and follow him amain.
Lan. The wind that bears him hence will fill our sails:
Come, come aboard, 'tis but an hour's sailing.
Y. Mor. Madam, stay you within this castle here.
Q. Isab. No, Mortimer, I'll to my lord the king.

Y. Mor. Nay, rather sail with us to Scarborough.

Q. Isab. You know the king is so suspicious,
As if he hear I have but talked with you,
Mine honour will be called in question;
And therefore, gentle Mortimer, be gone.

Y. Mor. Madam, I cannot stay to answer you,
But think of Mortimer as he deserves.

[*Exeunt all except* QUEEN ISABELLA.

Q. Isab. So well hast thou deserved, sweet Mortimer,
As Isabel could live with thee for ever.
In vain I look for love at Edward's hand,
Whose eyes are fixed on none but Gaveston,
Yet once more I'll importune him with prayer:
If he be strange and not regard my words,
My son and I will over into France,
And to the king my brother there complain,
How Gaveston hath robbed me of his love:
But yet I hope my sorrows will have end,
And Gaveston this blessèd day be slain. [*Exit.*

SCENE V. *The Open Country.*

Enter GAVESTON, *pursued.*

Gav. Yet, lusty lords, I have escaped your hands,
Your threats, your larums, and your hot pursuits;
And though divorcèd from King Edward's eyes,
Yet liveth Pierce of Gaveston unsurprised,
Breathing, in hope (malgrado all your beards,
That muster rebels thus against your king),
To see his royal sovereign once again.

Enter WARWICK, LANCASTER, PEMBROKE, YOUNG MORTIMER, Soldiers, James, *and other* Attendants of PEMBROKE.

War. Upon him, soldiers, take away his weapons.

Y. Mor. Thou proud disturber of thy country's peace,
Corrupter of thy king; cause of these broils,
Base flatterer, yield! and were it not for shame,
Shame and dishonour to a soldier's name,
Upon my weapon's point here should'st thou fall,
And welter in thy gore.
Lan. Monster of men!
That, like the Greekish strumpet, trained to arms
And bloody wars so many valiant knights;
Look for no other fortune, wretch, than death!
King Edward is not here to buckler thee.
War. Lancaster, why talk'st thou to the slave?
Go, soldiers, take him hence, for, by my sword,
His head shall off: Gaveston, short warning
Shall serve thy turn: it is our country's cause,
That here severely we will execute
Upon thy person. Hang him at a bough.
Gav. My lord!—
War. Soldiers, have him away;—
But for thou wert the favourite of a king,
Thou shalt have so much honour at our hands.
Gav. I thank you all, my lords: then I perceive,
That heading is one, and hanging is the other,
And death is all.

Enter ARUNDEL.

Lan. How now, my lord of Arundel?
Arun. My lords, King Edward greets you all by me.
War. Arundel, say your message.
Arun. His majesty,
Hearing that you had taken Gaveston,
Entreateth you by me, yet but he may
See him before he dies; for why, he says,
And sends you word, he knows that die he shall;
And if you gratify his grace so far,
He will be mindful of the courtesy.
War. How now?

Gav. Renownèd Edward, how thy name
Revives poor Gaveston!
War. No, it needeth not;
Arundel, we will gratify the king
In other matters; he must pardon us in this.
Soldiers, away with him!
Gav. Why, my lord of Warwick,
Will not these delays beget my hopes?
I know it, lords, it is this life you aim at;
Yet grant King Edward this.
Y. Mor. Shalt thou appoint
What we shall grant? Soldiers, away with him:
Thus we'll gratify the king,
We'll send his head by thee; let him bestow
His tears on that, for that is all he gets
Of Gaveston, or else his senseless trunk.
Lan. Not so, my lords, lest he bestow more cost
In burying him than he hath ever earned.
Arun. My lords, it is his majesty's request,
And in the honour of a king he swears,
He will but talk with him, and send him back.
War. When? can you tell? Arundel, no; we wot,
He that the care of his realm remits,
And drives his nobles to these exigents
For Gaveston, will, if he sees him once,
Violate any promise to possess him.
Arun. Then if you will not trust his grace in keep,
My lords, I will be pledge for his return.
Y. Mor. 'Tis honourable in thee to offer this;
But for we know thou art a noble gentleman,
We will not wrong thee so, to make away
A true man for a thief.
Gav. How mean'st thou, Mortimer? that is over-base.
Y. Mor. Away, base groom, robber of king's renown!
Question with thy companions and mates.
Pem. My lord Mortimer, and you, my lords, each one,
To gratify the king's request therein,
Touching the sending of this Gaveston,

Because his majesty so earnestly
Desires to see the man before his death,
I will upon mine honour undertake
To carry him, and bring him back again;
Provided this, that you my lord of Arundel
Will join with me.
War. Pembroke, what wilt thou do?
Cause yet more bloodshed? is it not enough
That we have taken him, but must we now
Leave him on "had I wist," and let him go?
Pem. My lords, I will not over-woo your honours,
But if you dare trust Pembroke with the prisoner,
Upon mine oath, I will return him back.
Arun. My lord of Lancaster, what say you in this?
Lan. Why, I say, let him go on Pembroke's word.
Pem. And you, Lord Mortimer?
Y. Mor. How say you, my lord of Warwick?
War. Nay, do your pleasures, I know how 'twill prove.
Pem. Then give him me.
Gav. Sweet sovereign, yet I come
To see thee ere I die.
War. Yet not perhaps,
If Warwick's wit and policy prevail. [*Aside.*
Y. Mor. My lord of Pembroke, we deliver him you;
Return him on your honour. Sound, away!
[*Exeunt all except* PEMBROKE, ARUNDEL, GAVESTON, James, *and other* Attendants of PEMBROKE.
Pem. My lord, you shall go with me.
My house is not far hence; out of the way
A little, but our men shall go along.
We that have pretty wenches to our wives,
Sir, must not come so near to baulk their lips.
Arun. 'Tis very kindly spoke, my lord of Pembroke;
Your honour hath an adamant of power
To draw a prince.
Pem. So, my lord. Come hither, James:
I do commit this Gaveston to thee,

Be thou this night his keeper; in the morning
We will discharge thee of thy charge: be gone.

Gav. Unhappy Gaveston, whither goest thou now?
[*Exit with* James *and the other* Attendants.

Horse-boy. My lord, we'll quickly be at Cobham. 111
[*Exeunt.*

ACT III.

SCENE I. *The Open Country.*

Enter GAVESTON *mourning*, James, *and other* Attendants *of* PEMBROKE.

Gav. O treacherous Warwick! thus to wrong thy friend.

James. I see it is your life these arms pursue.

Gav. Weaponless must I fall, and die in bands?
O! must this day be period of my life?
Centre of all my bliss? An ye be men,
Speed to the king.

Enter WARWICK *and* Soldiers.

War. My lord of Pembroke's men,
Strive you no longer—I will have that Gaveston.

James. Your lordship does dishonour to yourself,
And wrong our lord, your honourable friend.

War. No, James, it is my country's cause I follow.
Go, take the villain; soldiers, come away. 11
We'll make quick work. Commend me to your master,
My friend, and tell him that I watched it well.—
Come, let thy shadow parley with King Edward.

Gav. Treacherous earl, shall not I see the king?

War. The King of heaven perhaps, no other king.
Away!

[*Exeunt* WARWICK *and* Soldiers *with* GAVESTON.

James. Come, fellows, it booted not for us to strive,
We will in haste go certify our lord. [*Exeunt.*

Scene II. *Near Boroughbridge, in Yorkshire.*

Enter King Edward *and* Young Spencer, Baldock, *and* Nobles *of the* King's *side, and* Soldiers *with drums and fifes.*

K. Edw. I long to hear an answer from the barons
Touching my friend, my dearest Gaveston.
Ah! Spencer, not the riches of my realm
Can ransom him! ah, he is marked to die!
I know the malice of the younger Mortimer,
Warwick I know is rough, and Lancaster
Inexorable, and I shall never see
My lovely Pierce of Gaveston again!
The barons overbear me with their pride.
Y. Spen. Were I King Edward, England's sovereign,
Son to the lovely Eleanor of Spain,
Great Edward Longshanks' issue, would I bear
These braves, this rage, and suffer uncontrolled
These barons thus to beard me in my land,
In mine own realm? My lord, pardon my speech:
Did you retain your father's magnanimity,
Did you regard the honour of your name,
You would not suffer thus your majesty
Be counterbuft of your nobility.
Strike off their heads, and let them preach on poles!
No doubt, such lessons they will teach the rest,
As by their preachments they will profit much,
And learn obedience to their lawful king.
K. Edw. Yea, gentle Spencer, we have been too mild,
Too kind to them; but now have drawn our sword,
And if they send me not my Gaveston,
We'll steel it on their crest, and poll their tops.
Bald. This haught resolve becomes your majesty,
Not to be tied to their affection,
As though your highness were a schoolboy still,
And must be awed and governed like a child.

Enter the ELDER SPENCER, *with his truncheon, and* Soldiers.

E. Spen. Long live my sovereign, the noble Edward—
In peace triumphant, fortunate in wars!
K. Edw. Welcome, old man, com'st thou in Edward's aid?
Then tell thy prince of whence, and what thou art.
E. Spen. Lo, with a band of bowmen and of pikes,
Brown bills and targeteers, four hundred strong,
Sworn to defend King Edward's royal right,
I come in person to your majesty,
Spencer, the father of Hugh Spencer there,
Bound to your highness everlastingly,
For favour done, in him, unto us all.
K. Edw. Thy father, Spencer?
Y. Spen. True, an it like your grace,
That pours, in lieu of all your goodness shown,
His life, my lord, before your princely feet.
K. Edw. Welcome ten thousand times, old man, again.
Spencer, this love, this kindness to thy king,
Argues thy noble mind and disposition.
Spencer, I here create thee Earl of Wiltshire,
And daily will enrich thee with our favour,
That, as the sunshine, shall reflect o'er thee.
Beside, the more to manifest our love,
Because we hear Lord Bruce doth sell his land,
And that the Mortimers are in hand withal,
Thou shalt have crowns of us t' outbid the barons:
And, Spencer, spare them not, lay it on.
Soldiers, a largess, and thrice welcome all!
Y. Spen. My lord, here comes the queen.

Enter QUEEN ISABELLA, PRINCE EDWARD, *and* LEVUNE.

K. Edw. Madam, what news?
Q. Isab. News of dishonour, lord, and discontent.
Our friend Levune, faithful and full of trust,

Informeth us, by letters and by words,
That Lord Valois our brother, King of France,
Because your highness hath been slack in homage,
Hath seizèd Normandy into his hands.
These be the letters, this the messenger.

K. Edw. Welcome, Levune. Tush, Sib, if this be all,
Valois and I will soon be friends again.—
But to my Gaveston; shall I never see,
Never behold thee now?—Madam, in this matter,
We will employ you and your little son;
You shall go parley with the King of France.—
Boy, see you bear you bravely to the king,
And do your message with a majesty.

P. Edw. Commit not to my youth things of more weight
Than fits a prince so young as I to bear,
And fear not, lord and father—heaven's great beams
On Atlas' shoulder shall not lie more safe,
Than shall your charge committed to my trust.

Q. Isab. Ah, boy! this towardness makes thy mother fear
Thou art not marked to many days on earth.

K. Edw. Madam, we will that you with speed be shipped,
And this our son; Levune shall follow you
With all the haste we can despatch him hence.
Choose of our lords to bear you company;
And go in peace, leave us in wars at home.

Q. Isab. Unnatural wars, where subjects brave their king;
God end them once! My lord, I take my leave,
To make my preparation for France.

[*Exit with* PRINCE EDWARD.

Enter ARUNDEL.

K. Edw. What, Lord Arundel, dost thou come alone?

Arun. Yea, my good lord, for Gaveston is dead.

K. Edw. Ah, traitors! have they put my friend to death?
Tell me, Arundel, died he ere thou cam'st,
Or didst thou see my friend to take his death?
Arun. Neither, my lord; for as he was surprised,
Begirt with weapons and with enemies round,
I did your highness' message to them all;
Demanding him of them, entreating rather,
And said, upon the honour of my name,
That I would undertake to carry him
Unto your highness, and to bring him back.
K. Edw. And tell me, would the rebels deny me that?
Y. Spen. Proud recreants!
K. Edw. Yea, Spencer, traitors all.
Arun. I found them at the first inexorable;
The Earl of Warwick would not bide the hearing,
Mortimer hardly; Pembroke and Lancaster
Spake least: and when they flatly had denied.
Refusing to receive me pledge for him,
The Earl of Pembroke mildly thus bespake;
"My lords, because our sovereign sends for him,
And promiseth he shall be safe returned,
I will this undertake, to have him hence,
And see him re-delivered to your hands."
K. Edw. Well, and how fortunes that he came not?
Y. Spen. Some treason, or some villainy, was the cause.
Arun. The Earl of Warwick seized him on his way;
For being delivered unto Pembroke's men,
Their lord rode home, thinking his prisoner safe;
But ere he came, Warwick in ambush lay,
And bare him to his death; and in a trench
Strake off his head, and marched unto the camp.
Y. Spen. A bloody part, flatly 'gainst law of arms!
K. Edw. O shall I speak, or shall I sigh and die!

Y. Spen. My lord, refer your vengeance to the sword
Upon these barons; hearten up your men;
Let them not unrevenged murder your friends!
Advance your standard, Edward, in the field,
And march to fire them from their starting holes.
K. Edw. [*kneeling*]. By earth, the common mother of us all,
By heaven, and all the moving orbs thereof,
By this right hand, and by my father's sword,
And all the honours 'longing to my crown,
I will have heads, and lives for him, as many
As I have manors, castles, towns, and towers!—
[*Rises.*
Treacherous Warwick! traitorous Mortimer!
If I be England's king, in lakes of gore
Your headless trunks, your bodies will I trail,
That you may drink your fill, and quaff in blood,
And stain my royal standard with the same,
That so my bloody colours may suggest
Remembrance of revenge immortally
On your accursèd traitorous progeny,
You villains, that have slain my Gaveston!
And in this place of honour and of trust,
Spencer, sweet Spencer, I adopt thee here:
And merely of our love we do create thee
Earl of Gloucester, and Lord Chamberlain,
Despite of times, despite of enemies.
Y. Spen. My lord, here is a messenger from the barons
Desires access unto your majesty.
K. Edw. Admit him near.

Enter the Herald, *with his coat of arms.*

Her. Long live King Edward, England's lawful lord!
K. Edw. So wish not they, I wis, that sent thee hither

Thou com'st from Mortimer and his complices,
A ranker rout of rebels never was.
Well, say thy message.

Her. The barons, up in arms, by me salute
Your highness with long life and happiness;
And bid me say, as plainer to your grace,
That if without effusion of blood
You will this grief have ease and remedy,
That from your princely person you remove
This Spencer, as a putrifying branch,
That deads the royal vine, whose golden leaves
Empale your princely head, your diadem,
Whose brightness such pernicious upstarts dim,
Say they; and lovingly advise your grace,
To cherish virtue and nobility,
And have old servitors in high esteem,
And shake off smooth dissembling flatterers:
This granted, they, their honours, and their lives,
Are to your highness vowed and consecrate.

Y. Spen. Ah, traitors! will they still display their pride?

K. Edw. Away, tarry no answer, but be gone!
Rebels, will they appoint their sovereign
His sports, his pleasures, and his company?
Yet, ere thou go, see how I do divorce
[*Embraces* SPENCER
Spencer from me.—Now get thee to thy lords,
And tell them I will come to chastise them
For murdering Gaveston; hie thee, get thee gone!
Edward with fire and sword follows at thy heels.
[*Exit* Herald.
My lord, perceive you how these rebels swell?
Soldiers, good hearts, defend your sovereign's right,
For now, even now, we march to make them stoop.
Away! [*Exeunt. Alarums, excursions, a great fight, and a retreat sounded, within.*

SCENE III. *The battle-field, Boroughbridge.*

Enter KING EDWARD, *the* ELDER SPENCER, YOUNG SPENCER, *and* Noblemen *of the* King's *side.*

K. Edw. Why do we sound retreat? upon them, lords!
This day I shall pour vengeance with my sword
On those proud rebels that are up in arms,
And do confront and countermand their king.
Y. Spen. I doubt it not, my lord, right will prevail.
E. Spen. 'Tis not amiss, my liege, for either part
To breathe awhile; our men, with sweat and dust
All choked well near, begin to faint for heat;
And this retire refresheth horse and man.
Y. Spen. Here come the rebels.

Enter YOUNG MORTIMER, LANCASTER, WARWICK, PEMBROKE, *and others.*

Y. Mor. Look, Lancaster, yonder is Edward
Among his flatterers.
Lan. And there let him be
Till he pay dearly for their company.
War. And shall, or Warwick's sword shall smite in vain.
K. Edw. What, rebels, do you shrink and sound retreat?
Y. Mor. No, Edward, no, thy flatterers faint and fly.
Lan. They'd best betimes forsake thee, and their trains,
For they'll betray thee, traitors as they are.
Y. Spen. Traitor on thy face, rebellious Lancaster!
Pem. Away, base upstart, bravest thou nobles thus?
E. Spen. A noble attempt, and honourable deed,
Is it not, trow ye, to assemble aid,
And levy arms against your lawful king!
K. Edw. For which ere long their heads shall satisfy,
To appease the wrath of their offended king.

Y. Mor. Then, Edward, thou wilt fight it to the last,
And rather bathe thy sword in subjects' blood,
Than banish that pernicious company?

K. Edw. Ay, traitors all, rather than thus be braved,
Make England's civil towns huge heaps of stones,
And ploughs to go about our palace-gates.

War. A desperate and unnatural resolution!
Alarum!—to the fight!
Saint George for England, and the barons' right!

K. Edw. Saint George for England, and King Edward's right!

[*Alarums. Exeunt the two parties severally.*

Re-enter KING EDWARD *and his followers, with the* Barons *and* KENT, *captives.*

K. Edw. Now, lusty lords, now, not by chance of war,
But justice of the quarrel and the cause,
Vailed is your pride; methinks you hang the heads,
But we'll advance them, traitors; now 'tis time
To be avenged on you for all your braves,
And for the murder of my dearest friend,
To whom right well you knew our soul was knit,
Good Pierce of Gaveston, my sweet favourite.
Ah, rebels! recreants! you made him away.

Kent. Brother, in regard of thee, and of thy land,
Did they remove that flatterer from thy throne.

K. Edw. So, sir, you have spoke; away, avoid our presence! [*Exit* KENT.

Accursèd wretches, was't in regard of us,
When we had sent our messenger to request
He might be spared to come to speak with us,
And Pembroke undertook for his return,
That thou, proud Warwick, watched the prisoner,
Poor Pierce, and headed him 'gainst law of arms?
For which thy head shall overlook the rest,
As much as thou in rage outwent'st the rest.

War. Tyrant, I scorn thy threats and menaces;
It is but temporal that thou canst inflict.
Lan. The worst is death, and better die to live
Than live in infamy under such a king.
K. Edw. Away with them, my lord of Winchester! 60
These lusty leaders, Warwick and Lancaster,
I charge you roundly—off with both their heads!
Away!
War. Farewell, vain world.
Lan. Sweet Mortimer, farewell.
Y. Mor. England, unkind to thy nobility,
Groan for this grief, behold how thou art maimed!
K. Edw. Go, take that haughty Mortimer to the Tower,
There see him safe bestowed; and for the rest,
Do speedy execution on them all.
Begone! 70
Y. Mor. What, Mortimer! can ragged stony walls
Immure thy virtue that aspires to heaven?
No, Edward, England's scourge, it may not be;
Mortimer's hope surmounts his fortune far
[*The captive* Barons *are led off.*
K. Edw. Sound drums and trumpets! March with me, my friends;
Edward this day hath crowned him king anew.
[*Exeunt all except* Young Spencer, Levune, and Baldock.
Y. Spen. Levune, the trust that we repose in thee,
Begets the quiet of King Edward's land.
Therefore begone in haste, and with advice
Bestow that treasure on the lords of France, 80
That, therewith all enchanted, like the guard
That suffered Jove to pass in showers of gold
To Danae, all aid may be denied
To Isabel, the queen, that now in France
Makes friends, to cross the seas with her young son,
And step into his father's regiment.

Levune. That's it these barons and the subtle queen
Long levelled at.
Bal. Yea, but, Levune, thou seest
These barons lay their heads on blocks together;
What they intend, the hangman frustrates clean.
Levune. Have you no doubt, my lords, I'll clap so close
Among the lords of France with England's gold,
That Isabel shall make her plaints in vain,
And France shall be obdurate with her tears.
Y. Spen. Then make for France, amain—Levune away!
Proclaim King Edward's wars and victories.

[*Exeunt.*

ACT IV.

Scene I. *London, near the Tower.*

Enter Kent.

Kent. Fair blows the wind for France; blow, gentle gale,
Till Edmund be arrived for England's good!
Nature, yield to my country's cause in this.
A brother? no, a butcher of thy friends!
Proud Edward, dost thou banish me thy presence?
But I'll to France, and cheer the wrongèd queen,
And certify what Edward's looseness is.
Unnatural king! to slaughter noblemen
And cherish flatterers! Mortimer, I stay
Thy sweet escape: stand gracious, gloomy night,
To his device.

Enter Young Mortimer, *disguised.*

Y. Mor. Holla! who walketh there?
Is 't you, my lord?
Kent. Mortimer, 'tis I;
But hath thy potion wrought so happily?
Y. Mor. It hath, my lord; the warders all asleep,
I thank them, gave me leave to pass in peace.
But hath your grace got shipping unto France?
Kent. Fear it not. [*Exeunt.*

Scene II. *Paris.*

Enter Queen Isabella *and* Prince Edward.

Q. Isab. Ah, boy! our friends do fail us all in France:
The lords are cruel, and the king unkind;
What shall we do?
P. Edw. Madam, return to England,
And please my father well, and then a fig
For all my uncle's friendship here in France.
I warrant you, I'll win his highness quickly;
'A loves me better than a thousand Spencers.
Q. Isab. Ah, boy, thou art deceived, at least in this,
To think that we can yet be tuned together;
No, no, we jar too far. Unkind Valois!
Unhappy Isabel! when France rejects,
Whither, oh! whither dost thou bend thy steps!

Enter Sir John of Hainault.

Sir J. Madam, what cheer?
Q. Isab. Ah! good Sir John of Hainault,
Never so cheerless, nor so far distrest.
Sir J. I hear, sweet lady, of the king's unkindness;
But droop not, madam; noble minds contemn
Despair: will your grace with me to Hainault,
And there stay time's advantage with your son?
How say you, my lord, will you go with your friends,
And shake off all our fortunes equally?
P. Edw. So pleaseth the queen, my mother, me it likes;
The King of England, nor the court of France,
Shall have me from my gracious mother's side,
Till I be strong enough to break a staff;
And then have at the proudest Spencer's head.
Sir J. Well said, my lord.
Q. Isab. O, my sweet heart, how do I moan thy wrongs,
Yet triumph in the hope of thee, my joy!

Ah, sweet Sir John! even to the utmost verge
Of Europe, or the shore of Tanais,
We will with thee to Hainault—so we will:—
The marquis is a noble gentleman;
His grace, I dare presume, will welcome me.
But who are these?

Enter KENT *and* YOUNG MORTIMER.

Kent. Madam, long may you live,
Much happier than your friends in England do!
Q. Isab. Lord Edmund and Lord Mortimer alive!
Welcome to France! the news was here, my lord,
That you were dead, or very near your death.
Y. Mor. Lady, the last was truest of the twain:
But Mortimer, reserved for better hap,
Hath shaken off the thraldom of the Tower,
And lives t' advance your standard, good my lord.
P. Edw. How mean you? and the king, my father, lives!
No, my Lord Mortimer, not I, I trow.
Q. Isab. Not, son! why not? I would it were no worse.
But, gentle lords, friendless we are in France.
Y. Mor. Monsieur Le Grand, a noble friend of yours,
Told us, at our arrival, all the news—
How hard the nobles, how unkind the king
Hath showed himself; but, madam, right makes room
Where weapons want; and, though a many friends
Are made away, as Warwick, Lancaster,
And others of our party and faction;
Yet have we friends, assure your grace, in England
Would cast up caps, and clap their hands for joy.
To see us there, appointed for our foes.
Kent. Would all were well, and Edward well reclaimed,
For England's honour, peace, and quietness.
Y. Mor. But by the sword, my lord, 't must be deserved;
The king will ne'er forsake his flatterers.

Sir J. My lords of England, sith th' ungentle king
Of France refuseth to give aid of arms
To this distressèd queen his sister here,
Go you with her to Hainault; doubt ye not,
We will find comfort, money, men and friends
Ere long, to bid the English king a base.
How say, young prince? what think you of the match?
P. Edw. I think King Edward will outrun us all.
Q. Isab. Nay, son, not so; and you must not discourage
Your friends, that are so forward in your aid.
Kent. Sir John of Hainault, pardon us, I pray;
These comforts that you give our woful queen
Bind us in kindness all at your command.
Q. Isab. Yea, gentle brother; and the God of heaven
Prosper your happy motion, good Sir John.
Y. Mor. This noble gentleman, forward in arms,
Was born, I see, to be our anchor-hold.
Sir John of Hainault, be it thy renown,
That England's queen, and nobles in distress,
Have been by thee restored and comforted.
Sir J. Madam, along, and you, my lord, with me,
That England's peers may Hainault's welcome see.
[*Exeunt.*

Scene III. *London, the Royal Palace.*

Enter King Edward, Arundel, *the* Elder Spencer, *the* Younger Spencer, *and others.*

K. Edw. Thus after many threats of wrathful war,
Triumpheth England's Edward with his friends;
And triumph, Edward, with his friends uncontrolled!
My lord of Gloucester, do you hear the news?
Y. Spen. What news, my lord?
K. *Edw.* Why, man, they say there is great execution
Done through the realm; my lord of Arundel,
You have the note, have you not?

Arun. From the Lieutenant of the Tower, my lord.

K. Edw. I pray let us see it. [*Takes the note.*] What have we there?

Read it, Spencer. [*Gives note to* YOUNG SPENCER, *who reads the names.*

Why, so; they barked apace a month ago:
Now, on my life, they'll neither bark nor bite.
Now, sirs, the news from France? Gloucester, I trow
The lords of France love England's gold so well
As Isabella gets no aid from thence.
What now remains? have you proclaimed, my lord,
Reward for them can bring in Mortimer?

Y. Spen. My lord, we have; and if he be in England,
'A will be had ere long, I doubt it not.

K. Edw. If, dost thou say? Spencer, as true as death,
He is in England's ground; our portmasters
Are not so careless of their king's command.

Enter a MESSENGER.

How now, what news with thee? from whence come these?

Mess. Letters, my lord, and tidings forth of France;—
To you, my Lord of Gloucester, from Levune.
[*Gives letters to* YOUNG SPENCER.

K. Edw. Read.

Y. Spen. [*reads*].

"*My duty to your honour premised, etc., I have, according to instructions in that behalf, dealt with the King of France his lords, and effected that the queen, all discontented and discomforted, is gone: whither if you ask, with Sir John of Hainault, brother to the marquis, into Flanders. With them are gone Lord Edmund and the Lord Mortimer, having in their company divers of your nation, and others; and, as constant report goeth they intend to give King Edward battle in*

England, sooner than he can look for them. This is all the news of import.

Your honour's in all service, LEVUNE.

K. Edw. Ah, villains! hath that Mortimer escaped?
With him is Edmund gone associate?
And will Sir John of Hainault lead the round?
Welcome, o' God's name, madam, and your son;
England shall welcome you and all your rout.
Gallop apace, bright Phœbus, through the sky,
And dusky night, in rusty iron car,
Between you both shorten the time, I pray,
That I may see that most desirèd day,
When we may meet these traitors in the field.
Ah, nothing grieves me, but my little boy
Is thus misled to countenance their ills.
Come, friends, to Bristow, there to make us strong;
And, winds, as equal be to bring them in,
As you injurious were to bear them forth! [*Exeunt.*

SCENE IV. *The neighbourhood of Harwich.*

Enter QUEEN ISABELLA, PRINCE EDWARD, KENT, YOUNG MORTIMER, *and* SIR JOHN OF HAINAULT.

Q. Isab. Now, lords, our loving friends and countrymen,
Welcome to England all, with prosperous winds!
Our kindest friends in Belgia have we left,
To cope with friends at home; a heavy case
When force to force is knit, and sword and glaive
In civil broils make kin and countrymen
Slaughter themselves in others, and their sides
With their own weapons gored! But what's the help?
Misgoverned kings are cause of all this wreck;
And, Edward, thou art one among them all,
Whose looseness hath betrayed thy land to spoil,

And made the channel overflow with blood
Of thine own people; patron shouldst thou be,
But thou——
Y. Mor. Nay, madam, if you be a warrior,
You must not grow so passionate in speeches.
Lords,
Sith that we are by sufferance of heaven
Arrived, and armèd in this prince's right,
Here for our country's cause swear we to him
All homage, fealty, and forwardness;
And for the open wrongs and injuries
Edward hath done to us, his queen and land,
We come in arms to wreak it with the sword;
That England's queen in peace may repossess
Her dignities and honours: and withal
We may remove these flatterers from the king,
That havoc England's wealth and treasury.
Sir J. Sound trumpets, my lord, and forward let us march.
Edward will think we come to flatter him.
Kent. I would he never had been flattered more.
[*Exeunt.*

Scene V. *The neighbourhood of Bristol.*

Enter King Edward, Baldock, *and* Young Spencer.

Y Spen. Fly, fly, my lord! the queen is over-strong;
Her friends do multiply, and yours do fail.
Shape we our course to Ireland, there to breathe.
K. Edw. What! was I born to fly and run away,
And leave the Mortimers conquerors behind?
Give me my horse and let's reinforce our troops:
And in this bed of honour die with fame.
Bald. O no, my lord, this princely resolution
Fits not the time; away! we are pursued. [*Exeunt.*

Enter KENT, *with sword and target.*

Kent. This way he fled, but I am come too late.
Edward, alas! my heart relents for thee.
Proud traitor, Mortimer, why dost thou chase
Thy lawful king, thy sovereign, with thy sword?
Vile wretch! and why hast thou, of all unkind,
Borne arms against thy brother and thy king?
Rain showers of vengeance on my cursèd head,
Thou God, to whom in justice it belongs
To punish this unnatural revolt!
Edward, this Mortimer aims at thy life!
O fly him, then! But, Edmund, calm this rage,
Dissemble, or thou diest; for Mortimer
And Isabel do kiss, while they conspire:
And yet she bears a face of love forsooth.
Fie on that love that hatcheth death and hate!
Edmund, away! Bristow to Longshanks' blood
Is false; be not found single for suspect:
Proud Mortimer pries near unto thy walks.

Enter QUEEN ISABELLA, PRINCE EDWARD, YOUNG MORTIMER, *and* SIR JOHN OF HAINAULT.

Q. Isab. Successful battle gives the God of kings
To them that fight in right and fear his wrath.
Since then successfully we have prevailed,
Thankèd be heaven's great architect, and you.
Ere farther we proceed, my noble lords,
We here create our well-belovèd son,
Of love and care unto his royal person,
Lord Warden of the realm, and sith the fates
Have made his father so infortunate,
Deal you, my lords, in this, my loving lords,
As to your wisdoms fittest seems in all.
Kent. Madam, without offence, if I may ask,
How will you deal with Edward in his fall?
P. Edw. Tell me, good uncle, what Edward do you mean?

Kent. Nephew, your father: I dare not call him king.
Y. Mor. My lord of Kent, what needs these questions?
'Tis not in her controlment, nor in ours,
But as the realm and parliament shall please,
So shall your brother be disposèd of.—
I like not this relenting mood in Edmund.
Madam, 'tis good to look to him betimes.
[*Aside to the* QUEEN.
Q. Isab. My lord, the Mayor of Bristow knows our mind.
Y. Mor. Yea, madam, and they scape not easily
That fled the field.
Q. Isab. Baldock is with the king.
A goodly chancellor, is he not, my lord?
Sir J. So are the Spencers, the father and the son!
Kent. This Edward is the ruin of the realm.

Enter RICE AP HOWELL, *and the* MAYOR OF BRISTOW, *with the* ELDER SPENCER *prisoner, and* Attendants.

Rice. God save Queen Isabel, and her princely son.
Madam, the mayor and citizens of Bristow,
In sign of love and duty to this presence,
Present by me this traitor to the state,
Spencer, the father to that wanton Spencer,
That, like the lawless Catiline of Rome,
Revelled in England's wealth and treasury.
Q. Isab. We thank you all.
Y. Mor. Your loving care in this
Deserveth princely favours and rewards.
But where's the king and the other Spencer fled?
Rice. Spencer, the son, created Earl of Gloucester,
Is with that smooth-tongued scholar Baldock gone,
And shipped but late for Ireland with the king.
Y. Mor. Some whirlwind fetch them back or sink them all!— [*Aside.*
They shall be started thence, I doubt it not.
P. Edw. Shall I not see the king my father yet?

Kent. Unhappy's Edward, chased from England's bounds. [*Aside.*

Sir J. Madam, what resteth, why stand you in a muse?

Q. Isab. I rue my lord's ill-fortune; but alas!
Care of my country called me to this war.

Y. Mor. Madam, have done with care and sad complaint;
Your king hath wronged your country and himself,
And we must seek to right it as we may.
Meanwhile, have hence this rebel to the block.

E. Spen. Rebel is he that fights against the prince;
So fought not they that fought in Edward's right.

Y Mor. Take him away, he prates;
[*Exeunt* Attendants *with the* ELDER SPENCER.
You, Rice ap Howell,
Shall do good service to her majesty,
Being of countenance in your country here,
To follow these rebellious runagates.
We in meanwhile, madam, must take advice,
How Baldock, Spencer, and their complices,
May in their fall be followed to their end. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE VI. *The Abbey of Neath, Glamorganshire.*

Enter the Abbot, Monks, KING EDWARD, YOUNG SPENCER, *and* BALDOCK (*the three latter disguised*).

Abbot. Have you no doubt, my lord; have you no fear;
As silent and as careful we will be,
To keep your royal person safe with us,
Free from suspect, and fell invasion.
Of such as have your majesty in chase,
Yourself, and those your chosen company,
As danger of this stormy time requires.

K. Edw. Father, thy face should harbour no deceit.
O! hadst thou ever been a king, thy heart,
Pierced deeply with sense of my distress,
Could not but take compassion of my state.
Stately and proud, in riches and in train,
Whilom I was, powerful, and full of pomp:
But what is he whom rule and empery
Have not in life or death made miserable?
Come, Spencer; come, Baldock, come, sit down by me;
Make trial now of that philosophy,
That in our famous nurseries of arts
Thou suck'dst from Plato and from Aristotle.
Father, this life contemplative is heaven.
O that I might this life in quiet lead!
But we, alas! are chased; and you, my friends.
Your lives and my dishonour they pursue.
Yet, gentle monks, for treasure, gold nor fee,
Do you betray us and our company.

Monk. Your grace may sit secure, if none but we
Do wot of your abode.

Y. Spen. Not one alive, but shrewdly I suspect
A gloomy fellow in a mead below.
'A gave a long look after us, my lord;
And all the land I know is up in arms,
Arms that pursue our lives with deadly hate.

Bald. We were embarked for Ireland, wretched we!
With awkward winds and sore tempests driven
To fall on shore, and here to pine in fear
Of Mortimer and his confederates.

K. Edw. Mortimer! who talks of Mortimer?
Who wounds me with the name of Mortimer,
That bloody man? Good father, on thy lap
Lay I this head, laden with mickle care.
O might I never ope these eyes again!
Never again lift up this drooping head!
O never more lift up this dying heart!

Y. Spen. Look up, my lord.—Baldock, this drowsiness
Betides no good; here even we are betrayed.

Enter, with Welsh hooks, RICE AP HOWELL, *a* Mower, *and* LEICESTER.

Mow. Upon my life, these be the men ye seek.
Rice. Fellow, enough.—My lord, I pray be short,
A fair commission warrants what we do.
Leices. The queen's commission, urged by Mortimer;
What cannot gallant Mortimer with the queen?
Alas! see where he sits, and hopes unseen
To escape their hands that seek to reave his life.
Too true it is, *Quem dies vidit veniens superbum,*
Hunc dies vidit fugiens jacentem.
But, Leicester, leave to grow so passionate.
Spencer and Baldock, by no other names,
I do arrest you of high treason here.
Stand not on titles, but obey the arrest;
'Tis in the name of Isabel the queen.
My lord, why droop you thus?
K. Edw. O day, the last of all my bliss on earth!
Centre of all misfortune! O my stars,
Why do you lour unkindly on a king?
Comes Leicester, then, in Isabella's name
To take my life, my company from me?
Here, man, rip up this panting breast of mine,
And take my heart in rescue of my friends!
Rice. Away with them!
Y. Spen. It may become thee yet
To let us take our farewell of his grace.
Abbot. My heart with pity earns to see this sight,
A king to bear these words and proud commands.
[*Aside.*
K. Edw. Spencer, ah, sweet Spencer, thus then must we part?
Y. Spen. We must, my lord, so will the angry heavens.
K. Edw. Nay, so will hell and cruel Mortimer;
The gentle heavens have not to do in this.
Bald. My lord, it is in vain to grieve or storm.
Here humbly of your grace we take our leaves;
Our lots are cast; I fear me, so is thine.

K. Edw. In heaven we may, in earth ne'er shall we meet :
And, Leicester, say, what shall become of us ?
Leices. Your majesty must go to Killingworth.
K. Edw. Must ! it is somewhat hard, when kings must go.
Leices. Here is a litter ready for your grace,
That waits your pleasure, and the day grows old.
Rice. As good be gone, as stay and be benighted.
K. Edw. A litter hast thou ? lay me in a hearse,
And to the gates of hell convey me hence ;
Let Pluto's bells ring out my fatal knell,
And hags howl for my death at Charon's shore,
For friends hath Edward none but these and these,
And these must die under a tyrant's sword.
Rice. My lord, be going ; care not for these,
For we shall see them shorter by the heads.
K. Edw. Well, that shall be, shall be : part we must !
Sweet Spencer, gentle Baldock, part we must !
Hence feignèd weeds ! unfeignèd are my woes ;
[*Throws off his disguise.*
Father, farewell ! Leicester, thou stay'st for me,
And go I must. Life, farewell, with my friends.
[*Exeunt* KING EDWARD *and* LEICESTER.
Y. Spen. O ! is he gone ? is noble Edward gone ?
Parted from hence ? never to see us more ?
Rent, sphere of heaven ! and, fire, forsake thy orb !
Earth, melt to air ! gone is my sovereign,
Gone, gone, alas ! never to make return.
Bald. Spencer, I see our souls are fleeting hence ;
We are deprived the sunshine of our life :
Make for a new life, man ; throw up thy eyes
And heart and hands to heaven's immortal throne
Pay nature's debt with cheerful countenance ;
Reduce we all our lessons unto this,
To die, sweet Spencer, therefore live we all ;
Spencer, all live to die, and rise to fall.

Rice. Come, come, keep these preachments till you come to the place appointed. You, and such as you are, have made wise work in England; will your lordships away?

Mow. Your lordship, I trust, will remember me?

Rice. Remember thee, fellow! what else? Follow me to the town. [*Exeunt.*

ACT V.

Scene I. *Killingworth Castle.*

Enter King Edward, Leicester, *the* Bishop of Winchester, *and* Trussel.

Leices. Be patient, good my lord, cease to lament,
Imagine Killingworth Castle were your court,
And that you lay for pleasure here a space,
Not of compulsion or necessity.

K. Edw. Leicester, if gentle words might comfort me,
Thy speeches long ago had eased my sorrows;
For kind and loving hast thou always been.
The griefs of private men are soon allayed,
But not of kings. The forest deer, being struck,
Runs to an herb that closeth up the wounds;
But, when the imperial lion's flesh is gored,
He rends and tears it with his wrathful paw,
And highly scorning that the lowly earth
Should drink his blood, mounts up to the air.
And so it fares with me, whose dauntless mind
The ambitious Mortimer would seek to curb,
And that unnatural queen, false Isabel,
That thus hath pent and mewed me in a prison;
For such outrageous passions cloy my soul,
As with the wings of rancour and disdain
Full often am I soaring up to heaven,
To plain me to the gods against them both.
But when I call to mind I am a king,
Methinks I should revenge me of my wrongs,

That Mortimer and Isabel have done.
But what are kings, when regiment is gone,
But perfect shadows in a sunshine day?
My nobles rule, I bear the name of king;
I wear the crown, but am controlled by them,
By Mortimer, and my unconstant queen,
Who spots my nuptial bed with infamy;
Whilst I am lodged within this cave of care,
Where sorrow at my elbow still attends,
To company my heart with sad laments,
That bleeds within me for this strange exchange.
But tell me, must I now resign my crown,
To make usurping Mortimer a king?
B. of Win. Your grace mistakes; it is for England's good,
And princely Edward's right we crave the crown.
K. Edw. No, 'tis for Mortimer, not Edward's head;
For he's a lamb, encompassèd by wolves,
Which in a moment will abridge his life.
But if proud Mortimer do wear this crown,
Heavens turn it to a blaze of quenchless fire!
Or, like the snaky wreath of Tisiphon,
Engirt the temples of his hateful head;
So shall not England's vine be perishèd,
But Edward's name survives, though Edward dies.
Leices. My lord, why waste you thus the time away?
They stay your answer; will you yield your crown?
K. Edw. Ah, Leicester, weigh how hardly I can brook
To lose my crown and kingdom without cause;
To give ambitious Mortimer my right,
That like a mountain overwhelms my bliss,
In which extreme my mind here murdered is.
But what the heavens appoint, I must obey!
Here, take my crown; the life of Edward too;
[*Taking off the crown.*
Two kings in England cannot reign at once.
But stay awhile, let me be king till night,
That I may gaze upon this glittering crown;

So shall my eyes receive their last content,
My head, the latest honour due to it,
And jointly both yield up their wishèd right.
Continue ever, thou celestial sun;
Let never silent night possess this clime:
Stand still, you watches of the element;
All times and seasons, rest you at a stay,
That Edward may be still fair England's king!
But day's bright beam doth vanish fast away,
And needs I must resign my wishèd crown.
Inhuman creatures! nursed with tiger's milk!
Why gape you for your sovereign's overthrow?
My diadem I mean, and guiltless life.
See, monsters, see, I'll wear my crown again!
[*He puts on the crown.*
What, fear you not the fury of your king?
But, hapless Edward, thou art fondly led;
They pass not for thy frowns as late they did,
But seek to make a new-elected king;
Which fills my mind with strange despairing thoughts,
Which thoughts are martyrèd with endless torments,
And in this torment comfort find I none,
But that I feel the crown upon my head,
And therefore let me wear it yet awhile.

Trus. My lord, the parliament must have present news,
And therefore say, will you resign or no?
[*The* KING *rageth.*

K. Edw. I'll not resign, not whilst I live.
Traitors, be gone! and join you with Mortimer!
Elect, conspire, install, do what you will:—
Their blood and yours shall seal these treacheries!

B. of Win. This answer we'll return, and so farewell.
[*Going with* TRUSSEL.

Leices. Call them again, my lord, and speak them fair;
For if they go, the prince shall lose his right.

K. Edw. Call thou them back, I have no power to speak.

Leices. My lord, the king is willing to resign.

B. of Win. If he be not, let him choose.
K. Edw. O would I might! but heavens and earth conspire
To make me miserable! Here receive my crown;
Receive it? no, these innocent hands of mine
Shall not be guilty of so foul a crime.
He of you all that most desires my blood,
And will be called the murderer of a king,
Take it. What, are you moved? pity you me?
Then send for unrelenting Mortimer,
And Isabel, whose eyes, being turned to steel,
Will sooner sparkle fire than shed a tear.
Yet stay, for rather than I'll look on them,
Here, here! [*Gives the crown.*
Now, sweet God of heaven,
Make me despise this transitory pomp,
And sit for aye enthronizèd in heaven!
Come, death, and with thy fingers close my eyes,
Or if I live, let me forget myself.
B. of Win. My lord—
K. Edw. Call me not lord; away—out of my sight:
Ah, pardon me: grief makes me lunatic!
Let not that Mortimer protect my son;
More safety there is in a tiger's jaws,
Than his embracements. Bear this to the queen,
Wet with my tears, and dried again with sighs;
[*Gives a handkerchief.*
If with the sight thereof she be not moved,
Return it back and dip it in my blood.
Commend me to my son, and bid him rule
Better than I. Yet how have I transgressed,
Unless it be with too much clemency?
Trus. And thus most humbly do we take our leave.
[*Exeunt the* BISHOP OF WINCHESTER *and* TRUSSEL.
K. Edw Farewell; I know the next news that they bring
Will be my death; and welcome shall it be;
To wretched men, death is felicity.

Enter BERKELEY, *who gives a paper to* LEICESTER.

Leices. Another post! what news brings he.
K. Edw. Such news as I expect—come, Berkeley, come,
And tell thy message to my naked breast.
Berk. My lord, think not a thought so villainous
Can harbour in a man of noble birth.
To do your highness service and devoir,
And save you from your foes, Berkeley would die.
Leices. My lord, the council of the queen commands
That I resign my charge.
K. Edw. And who must keep me now? Must you, my lord?
Berk. Ay, my most gracious lord—so 'tis decreed.
K. Edw. [*taking the paper*]. By Mortimer, whose name is written here!
Well may I rent his name that rends my heart! [*Tears it.*
This poor revenge hath something eased my mind.
So may his limbs be torn, as is this paper!
Hear me, immortal Jove, and grant it too!
Berk. Your grace must hence with me to Berkeley straight.
K. Edw. Whither you will; all places are alike,
And every earth is fit for burial.
Leices. Favour him, my lord, as much as lieth in you.
Berk. Even so betide my soul as I use him.
K. Edw. Mine enemy hath pitied my estate,
And that's the cause that I am now removed.
Berk. And thinks your grace that Berkeley will be cruel?
K. Edw. I know not; but of this am I assured,
That death ends all, and I can die but once.
Leicester, farewell!
Leices. Not yet, my lord; I'll bear you on your way.
[*Exeunt.*

SCENE II. *London, the Royal Palace.*

Enter QUEEN ISABELLA *and* YOUNG MORTIMER.

Y. Mor. Fair Isabel, now have we our desire;
The proud corrupters of the light-brained king
Have done their homage to the lofty gallows,
And he himself lies in captivity.
Be ruled by me, and we will rule the realm.
In any case take heed of childish fear,
For now we hold an old wolf by the ears,
That, if he slip, will seize upon us both,
And gripe the sorer, being griped himself.
Think therefore, madam, that imports us much
To erect your son with all the speed we may,
And that I be protector over him;
For our behoof, 'twill bear the greater sway
Whenas a king's name shall be under writ.
Q. Isab. Sweet Mortimer, the life of Isabel,
Be thou persuaded that I love thee well,
And therefore, so the prince my son be safe,
Whom I esteem as dear as these mine eyes,
Conclude against his father what thou wilt,
And I myself will willingly subscribe.
Y. Mor. First would I hear news he were deposed,
And then let me alone to handle him.

Enter Messenger.

Letters from whence?
Mess. From Killingworth, my lord.
Q. Isab. How fares my lord the king?
Mess. In health, madam, but full of pensiveness.
Q. Isab. Alas, poor soul, would I could ease his grief!

Enter the BISHOP OF WINCHESTER *with the crown.*

Thanks, gentle Winchester. [*To the* Messenger.]
Sirrah, be gone. [*Exit* Messenger.
B. of Win. The king hath willingly resigned his crown.

Q. Isab. O happy news! send for the prince, my son.

B. of Win. Further, or this letter was sealed, Lord Berkeley came,
So that he now is gone from Killingworth;
And we have heard that Edmund laid a plot
To set his brother free; no more but so.
The lord of Berkeley is so pitiful
As Leicester that had charge of him before.

Q. Isab. Then let some other be his guardian.

Y. Mor. Let me alone, here is the privy seal.
[*Exit the* BISHOP OF WINCHESTER.
Who's there?—Call hither Gurney and Matrevis.
[*To* Attendants *within.*
To dash the heavy-headed Edmund's drift,
Berkeley shall be discharged, the king removed,
And none but we shall know where he lieth.

Q. Isab. But, Mortimer, as long as he survives,
What safety rests for us, or for my son?

Y. Mor. Speak, shall he presently be despatched and die?

Q. Isab. I would he were, so 'twere not by my means.

Enter MATREVIS *and* GURNEY.

Y. Mor. Enough.—
Matrevis, write a letter presently
Unto the lord of Berkeley from ourself
That he resign the king to thee and Gurney;
And when 'tis done, we will subscribe our name.

Mat. It shall be done, my lord. [*Writes.*

Y. Mor. Gurney.

Gur. My lord.

Y. Mor. As thou intend'st to rise by Mortimer,
Who now makes Fortune's wheel turn as he please,
Seek all the means thou canst to make him droop,
And neither give him kind word nor good look.

Gur. I warrant you, my lord.

Y. Mor. And this above the rest: because we hear
That Edmund casts to work his liberty,
Remove him still from place to place by night,
Till at the last he come to Killingworth,
And then from thence to Berkeley back again;
And by the way, to make him fret the more,
Speak curstly to him; and in any case
Let no man comfort him if he chance to weep,
But amplify his grief with bitter words.
Mat. Fear not, my lord, we'll do as you command.
Y. Mor. So now away; post thitherwards amain.
Q. Isab. Whither goes this letter? to my lord the king?
Commend me humbly to his majesty,
And tell him that I labour all in vain
To ease his grief, and work his liberty;
And bear him this as witness of my love.
[*Gives a ring.*
Mat. I will, madam. [*Exit with* GURNEY.
Y. Mor. Finely dissembled! Do so still, sweet queen.
Here comes the young prince with the Earl of Kent.
Q. Isab. Something he whispers in his childish ears.
Y. Mor. If he have such access unto the prince,
Our plots and stratagems will soon be dashed.
Q. Isab. Use Edmund friendly as if all were well.

Enter PRINCE EDWARD, *and* KENT *talking with him.*

Y. Mor. How fares my honourable lord of Kent?
Kent. In health, sweet Mortimer: how fares your grace?
Q. Isab. Well, if my lord your brother were enlarged.
Kent. I hear of late he hath deposed himself.
Q. Isab. The more my grief.
Y. Mor. And mine.
Kent. Ah, they do dissemble! [*Aside.*
Q. Isab. Sweet son, come hither, I must talk with thee.
Y. Mor. You being his uncle, and the next of blood,
Do look to be protector o'er the prince.

Kent. Not I, my lord; who should protect the son,
But she that gave him life? I mean the queen.
P. Edw. Mother, persuade me not to wear the crown:
Let him be king—I am too young to reign.
Q. Isab. But be content, seeing 'tis his highness' pleasure.
P. Edw. Let me but see him first, and then I will.
Kent. Ay, do, sweet nephew.
Q. Isab. Brother, you know it is impossible.
P. Edw. Why, is he dead?
Q. Isab. No, God forbid.
Kent. I would those words proceeded from your heart.
Y. Mor. Inconstant Edmund, dost thou favour him,
That wast a cause of his imprisonment?
Kent. The more cause have I now to make amends.
Y. Mor. [*Aside to* QUEEN ISAB.]. I tell thee, 'tis not meet that one so false
Should come about the person of a prince.
My lord, he hath betrayed the king his brother,
And therefore trust him not.
P. Edw. But he repents, and sorrows for it now.
Q. Isab. Come, son, and go with this gentle lord and me.
P. Edw. With you I will, but not with Mortimer.
Y. Mor. Why, youngling, 'sdain'st thou so of Mortimer?
Then I will carry thee by force away.
P. Edw. Help, uncle Kent! Mortimer will wrong me.
Q. Isab. Brother Edmund, strive not; we are his friends;
Isabel is nearer than the Earl of Kent.
Kent. Sister, Edward is my charge, redeem him.
Q. Isab. Edward is my son, and I will keep him.
Kent. Mortimer shall know that he hath wrongèd me!—
Hence will I haste to Killingworth Castle,

And rescue aged Edward from his foes,
To be revenged on Mortimer and thee. [*Aside.*

[*Exeunt on one side* QUEEN ISABELLA, PRINCE EDWARD, *and* YOUNG MORTIMER; *on the other,* KENT.

SCENE III. *Near Killingworth Castle.*

Enter MATREVIS *and* GURNEY *and* Soldiers, *with* KING EDWARD.

Mat. My lord, be not pensive, we are your friends;
Men are ordained to live in misery,
Therefore come,—dalliance dangereth our lives.
K. Edw. Friends, whither must unhappy Edward go?
Will hateful Mortimer appoint no rest?
Must I be vexèd like the nightly bird,
Whose sight is loathsome to all wingèd fowls?
When will the fury of his mind assuage?
When will his heart be satisfied with blood?
If mine will serve, unbowel straight this breast,
And give my heart to Isabel and him;
It is the chiefest mark they level at.
Gur. Not so, my liege, the queen hath given this charge
To keep your grace in safety;
Your passions make your dolours to increase.
K. Edw. This usage makes my misery to increase.
But can my air of life continue long
When all my senses are annoyed with stench?
Within a dungeon England's king is kept,
Where I am starved for want of sustenance.
My daily diet is heart-breaking sobs,
That almost rent the closet of my heart;
Thus lives old Edward not relieved by any,
And so must die, though pitièd by many.

O, water, gentle friends, to cool my thirst,
And clear my body from foul excrements!
Mat. Here's channel water, as our charge is given;
Sit down, for we'll be barbers to your grace.
K. Edw. Traitors, away! what, will you murder me,
Or choke your sovereign with puddle water?
Gur. No; but wash your face, and shave away your beard,
Lest you be known and so be rescuèd.
Mat. Why strive you thus? your labour is in vain!
K. Edw. The wren may strive against the lion's strength,
But all in vain: so vainly do I strive
To seek for mercy at a tyrant's hand.
[*They wash him with puddle water, and shave off his beard.*
Immortal powers! that knows the painful cares
That waits upon my poor distressèd soul,
O level all your looks upon these daring men,
That wrongs their liege and sovereign, England's king!
O Gaveston, 'tis for thee that I am wronged,
For me, both thou and both the Spencers died!
And for your sakes a thousand wrongs I'll take.
The Spencers' ghosts, wherever they remain,
Wish well to mine; then tush, for them I'll die.
Mat. 'Twixt theirs and yours shall be no enmity.
Come, come away; now put the torches out,
We'll enter in by darkness to Killingworth.

Enter KENT.

Gur. How now, who comes there?
Mat. Guard the king sure: it is the Earl of Kent.
K. Edw. O gentle brother, help to rescue me!
Mat. Keep them asunder; thrust in the king.
Kent. Soldiers, let me but talk to him one word.
Gur. Lay hands upon the earl for his assault.
Kent. Lay down your weapons, traitors! yield the king!

Mat. Edmund, yield thou thyself, or thou shalt die.
Kent. Base villains, wherefore do you gripe me thus?
Gur. Bind him and so convey him to the court.
Kent. Where is the court but here? here is the king;
And I will visit him; why stay you me?
Mat. The court is where Lord Mortimer remains;
Thither shall your honour go; and so farewell.
[*Exeunt* MATREVIS *and* GURNEY, *with* KING EDWARD.
Kent. O miserable is that commonweal,
Where lords keep courts, and kings are locked in prison!
Sol. Wherefore stay we! on, sirs, to the court!
Kent. Ay, lead me whither you will, even to my death,
Seeing that my brother cannot be released.
[*Exeunt.*

SCENE IV. *London, the Royal Palace.*

Enter YOUNG MORTIMER.

Y. Mor. The king must die, or Mortimer goes down;
The commons now begin to pity him:
Yet he that is the cause of Edward's death,
Is sure to pay for it when his son 's of age;
And therefore will I do it cunningly.
This letter, written by a friend of ours,
Contains his death, yet bids them save his life.
[*Reads.*
"*Edwardum occidere nolite timere bonum est*
Fear not to kill the king, 'tis good he die."
But read it thus, and that's another sense:
"*Edwardum occidere nolite timere bonum est*
Kill not the king, 'tis good to fear the worst."
Unpointed as it is, thus shall it go,
That, being dead, if it chance to be found,
Matrevis and the rest may bear the blame,
And we be quit that caused it to be done.

Within this room is locked the messenger
That shall convey it, and perform the rest:
And by a secret token that he bears,
Shall he be murdered when the deed is done.—
Lightborn, come forth!

Enter LIGHTBORN.

Art thou so resolute as thou wast?

Light. What else, my lord? and far more resolute.

Y. Mor. And hast thou cast how to accomplish it?

Light. Ay, ay, and none shall know which way he died.

Y. Mor. But at his looks, Lightborn, thou wilt relent.

Light. Relent! ha, ha! I use much to relent.

Y. Mor. Well, do it bravely, and be secret.

Light. You shall not need to give instructions;
'Tis not the first time I have killed a man.
I learned in Naples how to poison flowers;
To strangle with a lawn thrust down the throat;
To pierce the windpipe with a needle's point;
Or whilst one is asleep, to take a quill
And blow a little powder in his ears:
Or open his mouth and pour quicksilver down.
And yet I have a braver way than these.

Y. Mor. What's that?

Light. Nay, you shall pardon me; none shall know my tricks.

Y. Mor. I care not how it is, so it be not spied.
Deliver this to Gurney and Matrevis. [*Gives letter.*
At every ten mile end thou hast a horse.
Take this; [*Gives money*] away! and never see me more.

Light. No?

Y. Mor. No;
Unless thou bring me news of Edward's death.

Light. That will I quickly do. Farewell, my lord.
[*Exit.*

Y. Mor. The prince I rule, the queen do I command,
And with a lowly congé to the ground,
The proudest lords salute me as I pass;
I seal, I cancel, I do what I will.
Feared am I more than loved;—let me be feared,
And when I frown, make all the court look pale.
I view the prince with Aristarchus' eyes,
Whose looks were as a breeching to a boy.
They thrust upon me the protectorship,
And sue to me for that that I desire.
While at the council-table, grave enough,
And not unlike a bashful puritan,
First I complain of imbecility,
Saying it is *onus quam gravissimum*;
Till, being interrupted by my friends,
Suscepi that *provinciam* as they term it;
And to conclude, I am Protector now.
Now is all sure: the queen and Mortimer
Shall rule the realm, the king; and none rules us.
Mine enemies will I plague, my friends advance;
And what I list command who dare control?
Major sum quam cui possit fortuna nocere.
And that this be the coronation-day,
It pleaseth me and Isabel the queen.
[*Trumpets within.*
The trumpets sound; I must go take my place.

Enter KING EDWARD THE THIRD, QUEEN ISABELLA, *the* ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY, Champion *and* Nobles.

A. of Cant. Long live King Edward, by the grace of God,
King of England and Lord of Ireland!
Cham. If any Christian, Heathen, Turk, or Jew,
Dare but affirm that Edward's not true king,
And will avouch his saying with the sword,
I am the champion that will combat him.
Y. Mor. None comes, sound trumpets.
[*Trumpets sound.*

K. Edw. Third. Champion, here's to thee.
[*Gives a purse.*

Q. Isab. Lord Mortimer, now take him to your charge.

Enter Soldiers, *with* KENT *prisoner.*

Y. Mor. What traitor have we there with blades and bills?

Sol. Edmund, the Earl of Kent.

K. Edw. Third. What hath he done?

Sol. 'A would have taken the king away perforce,
As we were bringing him to Killingworth.

Y. Mor. Did you attempt his rescue, Edmund? speak.

Kent. Mortimer, I did; he is our king,
And thou compell'st this prince to wear the crown.

Y. Mor. Strike off his head! he shall have martial law.

Kent. Strike off my head! base traitor, I defy thee!

K. Edw. Third. My lord, he is my uncle, and shall live.

Y. Mor. My lord, he is your enemy, and shall die.

Kent. Stay, villains!

K. Edw. Third. Sweet mother, if I cannot pardon him,
Entreat my Lord Protector for his life.

Q. Isab. Son, be content; I dare not speak a word.

K. Edw. Third. Nor I, and yet methinks I should command;
But, seeing I cannot, I'll entreat for him—
My lord, if you will let my uncle live,
I will requite it when I come to age.

Y. Mor. 'Tis for your highness' good, and for the realm's.—
How often shall I bid you bear him hence?

Kent. Art thou king? must I die at thy command?

Y. Mor. At our command.—Once more away with him.

Kent. Let me but stay and speak; I will not go.
Either my brother or his son is king,
And none of both them thirst for Edmund's blood:
And therefore, soldiers, whither will you hale me?
[*They hale* KENT *away, to be beheaded.*
K. Edw. Third. What safety may I look for at his hands,
If that my uncle shall be murdered thus?
Q. Isab. Fear not, sweet boy, I'll guard thee from thy foes;
Had Edmund lived, he would have sought thy death.
Come, son, we'll ride a-hunting in the park.
K. Edw. Third. And shall my uncle Edmund ride with us?
Q. Isab. He is a traitor; think not on him; come.
[*Exeunt.*

SCENE V. *Berkeley Castle.*

Enter MATREVIS *and* GURNEY.

Mat. Gurney, I wonder the king dies not,
Being in a vault up to the knees in water,
To which the channels of the castle run,
From whence a damp continually ariseth,
That were enough to poison any man,
Much more a king brought up so tenderly.
Gur. And so do I, Matrevis: yesternight
I opened but the door to throw him meat,
And I was almost stifled with the savour.
Mat. He hath a body able to endure
More than we can inflict: and therefore now
Let us assail his mind another while.
Gur. Send for him out thence, and I will anger him.
Mat. But stay, who's this?

Enter LIGHTBORN.

Light. My Lord Protector greets you. [*Gives letter.*
Gur. What's here? I know not how to construe it.
Mat. Gurney, it was left unpointed for the nonce; "*Edwardum occidere nolite timere,*"
That's his meaning.
Light. Know you this token? I must have the king.
[*Gives token.*
Mat. Ay, stay awhile, thou shalt have answer straight.
This villain's sent to make away the king. [*Aside.*
Gur. I thought as much. [*Aside.*
Mat. And when the murder's done,
See how he must be handled for his labour.
Pereat iste! Let him have the king. [*Aside.*
What else? here is the key, this is the lake,
Do as you are commanded by my lord.
Light. I know what I must do. Get you away.
Yet be not far off, I shall need your help;
See that in the next room I have a fire,
And get me a spit, and let it be red-hot.
Mat. Very well.
Gur. Need you anything besides?
Light. What else? A table and a feather-bed.
Gur. That's all?
Light. Ay, ay; so, when I call you, bring it in.
Mat. Fear not thou that.
Gur. Here's a light, to go into the dungeon.
[*Gives light, and then exit with* MATREVIS.
Light. So now
Must I about this gear; ne'er was there any
So finely handled as this king shall be.
Foh, here's a place indeed, with all my heart!
K. Edw. Who's there? what light is that? wherefore com'st thou?
Light. To comfort you, and bring you joyful news.
K. Edw. Small comfort finds poor Edward in thy looks.
Villain, I know thou com'st to murder me.

Light. To murder you, my most gracious lord!
Far is it from my heart to do you harm.
The queen sent me to see how you were used,
For she relents at this your misery:
And what eyes can refrain from shedding tears,
To see a king in this most piteous state?
K. Edw. Weep'st thou already? list awhile to me
And then thy heart, were it as Gurney's is,
Or as Matrevis', hewn from the Caucasus,
Yet will it melt, ere I have done my tale.
This dungeon where they keep me is the sink
Wherein the filth of all the castle falls.
Light. O villains!
K. Edw. And there in mire and puddle have I stood
This ten days' space; and, lest that I should sleep,
One plays continually upon a drum.
They give me bread and water, being a king;
So that, for want of sleep and sustenance,
My mind's distempered, and my body's numbed,
And whether I have limbs or no I know not.
O, would my blood dropped out from every vein,
As doth this water from my tattered robes.
Tell Isabel, the queen, I looked not thus,
When for her sake I ran at tilt in France,
And there unhorsed the Duke of Cleremont.
Light. O speak no more, my lord! this breaks my heart.
Lie on this bed, and rest yourself awhile.
K. Edw. These looks of thine can harbour nought but death:
I see my tragedy written in thy brows.
Yet stay a while; forbear thy bloody hand,
And let me see the stroke before it comes,
That even then when I shall lose my life,
My mind may be more steadfast on my God.
Light. What means your highness to mistrust me thus?
K. Edw. What mean'st thou to dissemble with me thus?

Light. These hands were never stained with innocent blood,
Nor shall they now be tainted with a king's.
K. Edw. Forgive my thought for having such a thought.
One jewel have I left; receive thou this.
[*Giving jewel.*
Still fear I, and I know not what's the cause,
But every joint shakes as I give it thee.
O, if thou harbourest murder in thy heart,
Let this gift change thy mind, and save thy soul!
Know that I am a king: O, at that name
I feel a hell of grief! where is my crown?
Gone, gone! and do I remain alive?
Light. You're overwatched, my lord; lie down and rest.
K. Edw. But that grief keeps me waking, I should sleep;
For not these ten days have these eyes' lids closed.
Now as I speak they fall, and yet with fear
Open again. O wherefore sitt'st thou here?
Light. If you mistrust me, I'll begone, my lord.
K. Edw. No, no, for if thou mean'st to murder me,
Thou wilt return again, and therefore stay. [*Sleeps.*
Light. He sleeps.
K. Edw. [*waking*]. O let me not die yet: stay, O stay a while!
Light. How now, my lord?
K. Edw. Something still buzzeth in mine ears,
And tells me if I sleep I never wake;
This fear is that which makes me tremble thus;
And therefore tell me, wherefore art thou come?
Light. To rid thee of thy life.—Matrevis, come!

Enter MATREVIS *and* GURNEY.

K. Edw. I am too weak and feeble to resist.
Assist me, sweet God, and receive my soul!
Light. Run for the table.

K. Edw. O spare me, or despatch me in a trice.
[MATREVIS *brings in a table.*
Light. So, lay the table down, and stamp on it,
But not too hard, lest that you bruise his body.
[KING EDWARD *is murdered.*
Mat. I fear me that this cry will raise the town,
And therefore let us take horse and away.
Light. Tell me, sirs, was it not bravely done?
Gur. Excellent well: take this for thy reward.
[GURNEY *stabs* LIGHTBORN, *who dies.*
Come, let us cast the body in the moat,
And bear the king's to Mortimer our lord:
Away! [*Exeunt with the bodies.*

SCENE VI. *London, the Royal Palace.*

Enter YOUNG MORTIMER *and* MATREVIS.

Y. Mor. Is 't done, Matrevis, and the murderer dead?
Mat. Ay, my good lord; I would it were undone!
Y. Mor. Matrevis, if thou now grow'st penitent
I'll be thy ghostly father; therefore choose,
Whether thou wilt be secret in this,
Or else die by the hand of Mortimer.
Mat. Gurney, my lord, is fled, and will, I fear,
Betray us both, therefore let me fly.
Y. Mor. Fly to the savages!
Mat. I humbly thank your honour. [*Exit.*
Y. Mor. As for myself, I stand as Jove's huge tree,
And others are but shrubs compared to me.
All tremble at my name, and I fear none;
Let's see who dare impeach me for his death!

Enter QUEEN ISABELLA.

Q. Isab. Ah, Mortimer, the king my son hath news
His father's dead, and we have murdered him!

Y. Mor. What if he have? the king is yet a child.
Q. Isab. Ay, but he tears his hair, and wrings his hands,
And vows to be revenged upon us both.
Into the council-chamber he is gone,
To crave the aid and succour of his peers.
Ay me! see where he comes, and they with him;
Now, Mortimer, begins our tragedy.

Enter KING EDWARD THE THIRD, Lords *and* Attendants.

1*st Lord.* Fear not, my lord, know that you are a king.
K. Edw. Third. Villain!—
Y. Mor. Ho, now, my lord!
K. Edw. Third. Think not that I am frighted with thy words!
My father's murdered through thy treachery;
And thou shalt die, and on his mournful hearse
Thy hateful and accursèd head shall lie,
To witness to the world that by thy means
His kingly body was too soon interred.
Q. Isab. Weep not, sweet son!
K. Edw. Third. Forbid me not to weep; he was my father;
And, had you loved him half so well as I,
You could not bear his death thus patiently.
But you, I fear, conspired with Mortimer.
1*st Lord.* Why speak you not unto my lord the king?
Y. Mor. Because I think it scorn to be accused.
Who is the man dares say I murdered him?
K. Edw. Third. Traitor! in me my loving father speaks,
And plainly saith, 'twas thou that murder'dst him.
Y. Mor. But has your grace no other proof than this?
K. Edw. Third. Yes, if this be the hand of Mortimer.
[*Showing letter.*

Y. Mor. False Gurney hath betrayed me and himself.
[*Aside.*
Q. Isab. I feared as much; murder cannot be hid.
[*Aside.*
Y. Mor. It is my hand; what gather you by this?
K. Edw. Third. That thither thou didst send a murderer.
Y. Mor. What murderer? Bring forth the man I sent.
K. Edw. Third. Ah, Mortimer, thou knowest that he is slain;
And so shalt thou be too—Why stays he here,
Bring him unto a hurdle, drag him forth;
Hang him, I say, and set his quarters up;
But bring his head back presently to me.
Q. Isab. For my sake, sweet son, pity Mortimer.
Y. Mor. Madam, entreat not, I will rather die,
Than sue for life unto a paltry boy.
K. Edw. Third. Hence with the traitor! with the murderer!
Y. Mor. Base Fortune, now I see, that in thy wheel
There is a point, to which when men aspire,
They tumble headlong down: that point I touched,
And, seeing there was no place to mount up higher,
Why should I grieve at my declining fall?—
Farewell, fair queen; weep not for Mortimer,
That scorns the world, and, as a traveller,
Goes to discover countries yet unknown.
K. Edw. Third. What! suffer you the traitor to delay?
[MORTIMER *is taken away by* 1st Lord *and* Attendants.
Q. Isab. As thou receivedest thy life from me,
Spill not the blood of gentle Mortimer!
K. Edw. Third. This argues that you spilt my father's blood,
Else would you not entreat for Mortimer.
Q. Isab. I spill his blood? no.

K. Edw. Third. Ay, madam, you ; for so the rumour runs.

Q. Isab. That rumour is untrue ; for loving thee,
Is this report raised on poor Isabel.

K. Edw. Third. I do not think her so unnatural.

2nd Lord. My lord, I fear me it will prove too true.

K. Edw. Third. Mother, you are suspected for his death,
And therefore we commit you to the Tower
Till farther trial may be made thereof ;
If you be guilty, though I be your son,
Think not to find me slack or pitiful.

Q. Isab. Nay, to my death, for too long have I lived,
Whenas my son thinks to abridge my days.

K. Edw. Third. Away with her, her words enforce these tears,
And I shall pity her if she speak again.

Q. Isab. Shall I not mourn for my belovèd lord,
And with the rest accompany him to his grave ?

2nd Lord. Thus, madam, 'tis the king's will you shall hence.

Q. Isab. He hath forgotten me ; stay, I am his mother.

2nd Lord. That boots not ; therefore, gentle madam, go.

Q. Isab. Then come, sweet death, and rid me of this grief. [*Exit.*

Re-enter 1st Lord, *with the head of* MORTIMER.

1st Lord. My lord, here is the head of Mortimer.

K. Edw. Third. Go fetch my father's hearse where it shall lie ;
And bring my funeral robes. [*Exeunt* Attendants.
Accursèd head,
Could I have ruled thee then, as I do now,
Thou had'st not hatched this monstrous treachery !—
Here comes the hearse ; help me to mourn, my lords.

Re-enter Attendants *with the hearse and funeral robes.*

Sweet father, here unto thy murdered ghost
I offer up this wicked traitor's head;
And let these tears, distilling from mine eyes,
Be witness of my grief and innocency. [*Exeunt.*

NOTES AND GLOSSARY

NOTES AND GLOSSARY

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

King Edward II. He was the son of King Edward I; was born in 1284; succeeded to the throne in 1307; was deposed in 1327 and murdered at Berkeley Castle, Gloucestershire, that same year.

Prince Edward. He was the son of King Edward II and Isabella, being born in 1312. He succeeded to the throne as Edward III in 1327 and died in 1377.

Edmund, Earl of Kent. The son of Edward I and half-brother of Edward II, he was born in 1301 and put to death by Mortimer in 1330.

Gaveston. Piers Gaveston was the son of a Gascon knight, and from early years the playfellow of Edward II. He was banished from England in 1307 by Edward I owing to his bad influence over the Prince, but returned on the accession of Edward II. He was given the earldom of Cornwall and married Margaret, daughter of the Earl of Gloucester. In 1308 he was banished, but returned the following year. He was again banished in 1311, but was back in 1312. A few months afterwards he was captured by the barons at Scarborough and beheaded.

Archbishop of Canterbury. Robert Winchelsey was Archbishop from 1294 to 1313.

Bishop of Coventry. Walter Langton was Bishop of Coventry, Lichfield and Chester from 1295 to 1315.

Bishop of Winchester. John Stratford became Bishop in 1323 and Archbishop of Canterbury in 1333.

Warwick. Guy, Earl of Warwick, was one of the chief opponents of Edward II and Gaveston and played the main part in putting the latter to death. He died in 1315.

Lancaster. Thomas, Earl of Lancaster, was the most powerful noble in the country and the most vigorous in his opposition to the king. He was the enemy of Gaveston and of the Despensers. He was defeated by the King's forces at the battle of Boroughbridge in 1322, and afterwards beheaded.

Pembroke. Aymer, Earl of Pembroke, was one of the barons who opposed Gaveston, but was afterwards on the side of Edward II against Lancaster. The hostility to the king attributed to him in the play, even after Gaveston's death, is unhistorical.

Arundel. Edmund, Earl of Arundel, was, like Pembroke, a supporter of the king after Gaveston's death and an opponent of Lancaster. He was beheaded in 1326 by the order of Mortimer.

Leicester. Henry, Earl of Leicester, was the brother of Lancaster. He joined the queen's party against the Despensers, but, after the accession of Edward III, opposed Mortimer.

Berkeley. Sir Thomas Berkeley was the lord of Berkeley Castle which was seized by the younger Despenser. Berkeley sided with the queen's party.

Mortimer the elder. Roger Mortimer of Chirk was a powerful baron on the border of Wales. He opposed Edward II and unsuccessfully revolted against him in 1321. He was imprisoned and died in the Tower.

Mortimer the younger. Roger Mortimer of Wigmore was, like his uncle, the elder Mortimer, a baron on the Welsh border. With his uncle he fought against the king in 1321–2, was imprisoned and escaped in 1324. He joined the queen and led the army which defeated the Despensers and the king. In 1327 he was made Earl of March and virtually ruled England till 1330. In that year he was attainted of high treason and executed.

Spencer the elder. Hugh le Despenser fought in the Scottish wars of Edward I. He supported Edward II against Lancaster and later he and his son became the king's chief advisers. He was captured and hanged by the queen's party in 1326.

Spencer the younger. He was the son of the elder Spencer and with him guided the king's policy from 1322 to 1326. He was made Earl of Gloucester and after his defeat in 1326 was beheaded at Hereford.

Baldock. Robert of Baldock, a supporter of the Spencers, was made Chancellor in 1323 and became very unpopular. He fled with the king before the queen's troops, was taken prisoner and died in 1327.

Beaumont. Henry de Beaumont at first a supporter of the king joined the queen's party against the Spencers.

Trussel. Sir William Trussel as proctor of the parliament of 1327 renounced, in the name of parliament, all fealty to Edward II.

Gurney. Thomas Gournay was one of the murderers of Edward II. He afterwards fled the country.

Matrevis. The custody of the king was entrusted to Sir John Maltravers, who left the country after Edward's murder.

Sir John of Hainault. He was the brother of William, Count of Hainault, a supporter of the queen and uncle of Philippa who became wife of Edward III.

Queen Isabella. She was the daughter of Philip of France and married Edward II in 1308. She was sent by the king in 1325 as ambassador to her brother, Charles IV of France who had for long demanded Edward's homage for his French possessions of Gascony and Ponthieu. In France she gathered about her many of the barons who were hostile to the Spencers, and in 1326 landed in England with an army. She

overthrew the king's forces and with Mortimer ruled England till 1330. On Mortimer's fall she was sent by Edward III to live in Norfolk. She died in 1357.

Niece to Edward II. Margaret de Clare was the daughter of the Earl of Gloucester, who had married the daughter of Edward I. Margaret married Gaveston in 1307.

ACT I

SCENE I

1. **My father is deceased :** Edward I, who had banished his son's friend Gaveston, died in July, 1307.

8. **Leander :** the hero of the Greek love story, immortalized by Marlowe in his poem *Hero and Leander*. Leander nightly swam the Hellespont to visit his sweetheart Hero.

14. **die :** swoon. Some editors unnecessarily change to "lie."

22. **tanti :** an expression of contempt (gen. sing. of Lat. *tantum*), "so much for that."

31. **trencher :** plate.

34. **against the Scot :** in the Scottish wars of Edward I.

41. The old belief was that the porcupine could shoot its quills.

55. **Italian masks :** The mask was a courtly dramatic entertainment which with its story blended pageantry, dance and song. It was supposed to have originated in Italy. The mask was very popular with Elizabeth and James, from whose reigns the best examples come. It is of his own time rather than that of Edward II that Marlowe is thinking.

59. **satyrs :** the woodland deities of classical mythology; in form half human, half goat.

60. **antic hay :** a quaint country dance.

61. **Dian :** Diana, the maiden goddess of hunting.
shape : costume.

67. **Actæon :** the unfortunate huntsman who espied Diana bathing, and was by her changed into a stag and devoured by the hounds. The story is told in Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, III.

Stage dir. **Kent :** Edward's half-brother. His presence is quite unhistorical here, as he was only a child at Edward's accession.

108. **to the proof :** to the point.

110. There is no historical basis for this quarrel between Lord Percy and Moubery in the reign of Edward I. A quarrel between Hereford and Mowbray in Richard II's reign is dramatized by Shakespeare in *Richard II*.

118. **Preach :** give a warning lesson to like offenders.

123. **cousin :** a term applied to any kinsman.

128. Warwick and Lancaster are speaking ironically.

133. **glozing :** flattering.

137. **bandy :** contend, the metaphor is from the game of tennis.

144. **Hylas :** the youth who accompanied Hercules when, with Jason, he went in quest of the Golden Fleece. Hylas went ashore when the Argonauts arrived at Mysia, and there was carried away by nymphs enamoured of his beauty.

156. **King and Lord of Man :** the rulers of the Isle of Man were formerly entitled to the name of king.

165. **regiment :** rule.

176. **exequies :** funeral rites.

187. **stole :** a priestly vestment.

188. **channel :** street gutter.

197. **bolts :** fetters.

198. **Tower, the Fleet :** The Tower of London and the Fleet prison were both used for political prisoners.

SCENE II

6. **timeless :** untimely.

7. **peevish :** foolish.

19. **vailing :** removing.

25. **take exceptions at :** make objection to.

26. **stomach :** are angry at.

27. **bewrays :** reveals.

37. **asseized :** taken possession of.

47. **Unto the forest :** she speaks figuratively ; " away from the world."

61. The old editions give this line to the Archbishop of Canterbury.

75. **New Temple :** founded by the Knights Templars in England in the reign of Henry II. It was often used as the meeting-place for Parliaments and Councils. " Hereupon they assembled togither in the parlement time, at the new temple, on Saturdaie next before the feast of saint Dunstan, and there ordeined that the said Peers should abjure the realme." (Holinshed).

78. **Lambeth :** The Archbishop's palace, on the south side of the Thames.

SCENE III

5. Some editors give the second half of this line to Kent.

SCENE IV

7. **declined from :** turned away from.

8. **moved :** amazed.

13. **Quam male conveniunt :** how ill they match.

16. **Phaeton :** the son of Phoebus allowed by his father to drive for a day the chariot of the Sun, which he did to his destruction.

19. **faced :** outfaced. **over-peered :** There is a play on the two meanings of peer—" to look " and " nobleman."

30. **minion :** favourite.

49. **fleet :** float.

50. **Inde :** India.

36. **boots :** profits.

82. **lown :** low-born fellow.

92. **sort :** class.

97. **imperial :** domineering. In this outburst against Rome it is rather the sentiments of Marlowe's own time than those of Edward II's reign which are reflected.

142. **pass :** care.

172. **charming Circe :** the enchantress of classical mythology. The story of her walking over the waves is told by Ovid in *Metamorphoses*, XIV.

174. **Hymen :** the goddess of marriage.

178. **frantic Juno, etc. :** For the story of Jove's abduction of Ganymede to be his cup-bearer and the plaints of Juno, see Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, X.

188. **ill-entreated :** ill-treated.

191. **'long of :** on account of.

211. **tender'st :** hold dear.

223. **torpedo :** the electric ray, a fish which electrically shocks its prey.

248. **respect :** point of consideration.

255. **sophister :** fallacious reasoner, quibbler.

260. **front :** oppose.

261. **whereas :** where.

279. **colour :** excuse.

280. **borne it out :** braved it.

288. **buckler :** shield.

291. **groom :** low fellow.

313. **Cyclops :** They were, according to classical mythology, the blacksmiths of Jupiter, making for him his thunderbolts at forges under Aetna.

331. **these :** his arms.

350. **triumphs :** tournaments.

359. **Chirke :** the elder Mortimer's estate on the Welsh border.

362. This command given to the elder Mortimer against the Scots is unhistorical.

371. **Iris :** the messenger of the Gods.
Mercury : who carried out Jupiter's commands.

392. **Hephestion :** the intimate friend of Alexander the Great.

393. See I. i. 144.

394. **Patroclus :** the friend of Achilles and slain by Hector, the son of Priam of Troy. His death roused Achilles from sulking in his tent. See Iliad, XXIII.

396. **Tully :** There was nothing in the relationship of Marcus Tullius Cicero and Octavius that would justify the parallel here.

397. **Socrates, etc. :** Socrates, the Greek philosopher, had a special liking for the handsome and clever but wild-living youth Alcibiades.

408. **Midas :** the Phrygian king whom Bacchus endowed with the power to turn to gold anything he touched.
jets it : swaggers.

409. **outlandish cullions :** foreign rogues; referring to the people who accompanied Gaveston from France.

411. **Proteus :** the sea-god who constantly changed his shape.

412. **Jack :** presumptuous fellow.

414. **larded :** covered over. This outburst on Gaveston's apparel is in keeping with the many satires against the adoption of foreign fashions, especially French and Italian, by the travelled Englishmen of the age of Elizabeth.

ACT II

SCENE I

2. **Earl of Gloucester :** The reference is to Gilbert de Clare, son-in-law of Edward I. He had died in 1295.

6. **factious :** in opposition to authority.

19. **post :** messenger.

29. **preferred :** advanced.

32. **court it :** play the courtier.

38. **low legs :** bows.

44. **toys :** foolish trifles; an evident satirical reference by Marlowe to the Puritans of his own time.

53. **propterea quod :** because ; i.e. with formal precision.

54. **quandoquidem :** whereas ; evidently regarded as a more elegant term than "propterea quod."

55. **form a verb :** choose his words carefully.

71. **coach :** There is an anachronism here. Coaches were introduced into England in the middle of the sixteenth century.

73. **park-pale :** boundary of the park.

SCENE II.

3. **passionate :** emotionally excited.

11. **device :** representation and motto on a shield.

12. **triumph :** tournament.

18. **canker :** the canker-worm which causes blight.

20. **Æque tandem :** "to an equality at last" ; referring to the eminence beside the eagle (the king) to which the canker (Gaveston) has climbed the cedar (the tree of loyalty). Another interpretation has been suggested : "justly at last" ; referring to the justice which will in the end overtake the presumptuous Gaveston.

23. **Pliny :** There is no such description in the *Natural History* of Pliny, the Latin author. Marlowe vaguely attributes to him an account of the fish which he may have heard from a sailor or have read in Hakluyt's *Voyages*.

28. **Undique mors est :** on all sides there is death.

40. **jesses :** the thongs, attached to the legs, by which the hawk was leashed.

46. **harpy :** one of the winged devouring monsters, half woman, half bird, mentioned by Virgil, *Æneid, III.*

53. **Danae :** the daughter of Arisius, King of Argos, who was imprisoned in a brazen tower by her father. The legend tells merely of the visit which Jupiter paid her in the form of a golden shower.

59. **preventeth :** anticipates.

62. **painted :** i.e. with flowers.

71. **injuries :** insults.

81. The Quarto of 1598 reads :

> *Pem.* Here ! here ! King : Convey hence Gaveston ; they'll murder him.

The emendation, which brings the sense more into conformity with the attitudes of the king and Pembroke to Gaveston, seems fully justified.

83. **salve :** requite.

88. **abide :** pay for.

100. **moved :** angry.

114. The elder Mortimer's capture by the Scots is not historical.

121. **head :** army.

145. **broad seal :** The king sarcastically offers a licence under the Great Seal to Mortimer to gather alms for his uncle's ransom.

155. **masks :** See I. i. 55.

160 **Thy garrisons :** Marlowe attempts no historical accuracy here. The war between the French king and Edward's garrisons in his possessions in France did not start till later in the reign.

162. **Oneyl :** The O'Neill's were famous Irish chieftains, but neither Holinshed nor Stowe mentions any O'Neill as taking part in the Irish disturbances in the reign of Edward II.

162. **Kerns :** Irish foot-soldiers.

163 **English pale :** the English settlement around Dublin.

164. **Scots :** Again Marlowe's history is loose. It was after Bannockburn in 1314 that the Scots made frequent advances into the north of England.
road : inroad.

166. **narrow seas :** the English Channel. There is no historical justification for this statement. Denmark, however, was in Marlowe's time a strong sea power.

169. **sort :** company.

175. **libels :** abusive writings.
again : against.

181. **players :** play actors.

185. **labels :** ribbons.

186. **fleering :** sneering.

187. **jig :** a short lively ballad or song. The song is taken from Fabyan's *Chronicle*.

189. **lemans :** lovers.

193. **rombelow :** a usual ballad refrain.

195. **Wigmore :** Wigmore Castle, the home of the Mortimers in Herefordshire.
fly : go, be sold.

232. **Tower :** the Tower of London, the State prison.

239. **entertain :** take into service.

241. **gentry :** title to high birth.

254. **cousin :** See I. i. 123.

258. **stomach :** be angry with.

SCENE III

5. **of policy :** as a stratagem.

8. **cast :** conjecture.

21. **tottered :** tattered.

23. The name Mortimer was falsely supposed to be derived from "mortuum mare," the dead sea.

SCENE IV

4. **hold :** stronghold.

6. **post :** hasten.

29. **minion :** favourite.

40. **foreslow :** lose.

46. **hoy :** small vessel, sloop.

47. **amain :** straightway.

64. **strange :** unsympathetic.

SCENE V

4. **unsurprised :** uncaptured.

5. **malgrado :** in spite of.

15. **Greekish strumpet :** Helen of Troy.
trained : enticed.

18. **buckler :** shield.

28. Hanging was a dishonourable death for gentlemen.

37. **for why :** because.

47. This is said sarcastically to Warwick : "As if any such delay entailed gave me much hope of saving myself."

49. **appoint :** decide.

60. **wot :** know.

62. **exigents :** extremes.

63. **sees :** The old editions read "seize." This is Cunningham's emendation.

65. **in keep :** in custody.

85. **had I wist :** "had I known"; the remark of regret at having acted rashly.

103. **baulk :** avoid, disappoint.

105. **adamant :** loadstone, magnet.

ACT III

SCENE I

3. **bands :** bonds.

4. **period :** end.

5. **Centre of all my bliss ? :** a puzzling phrase. Perhaps "centre" is used in the sense of "lowest point"; or the phrase may be an apostrophe to the king.
an : if.

17. **booted :** was of no avail.

SCENE II

12. **Longshanks :** the name given to Edward I on account of his stature.

16. **magnanimity :** high-spirited nature.

19. **counterbuft :** driven back by a buff or blow.

22. **preachments :** sermons.

27. **steel it :** strike with swords.
crest : head.
poll : cut off.

28. **haught :** proud, daring.

29. **affection :** caprice.
bills : pikes carried by the foot-soldiers; used of the soldiers themselves.

37. **targeteers :** soldiers with shields.

43. Historically the elder Spencer was already well known to the king, being one of the most important nobles.

49. **Spencer :** i.e. the younger. This earldom was not given to him.

54. **in hand :** negotiating.

57. **largess :** bounty.

64. **Normandy :** The dispute in 1323 was really over the homage demanded of Edward by the French king for his lands of Ponthieu and Guienne.

66. **Sib :** probably an abbreviation of "Isabel."

70. The queen was sent to try to arrange matters between Edward and the French king in 1325.

74. In this speech with its classical allusion, Marlowe makes no attempt to fit the language to the boyishness of the Prince.

77. **Atlas :** one of the Titans who was supposed to carry the heavens on his shoulders.

79. **towardness :** aptness, readiness.

87. **once :** once for all.

113. **fortunes :** comes it to pass.

120. **strake :** struck.

121. **part :** deed.

127. **starting holes :** a hunting term : the holes in which the animal took refuge and from which it had to be started by fire.

131. **'longing :** belonging.

158. **plainer :** complainer.

160. **will :** desire.

163. **deads :** kills.

164. **empale :** surround.

181. **swell :** grow arrogant.

SCENE III

The method of suggesting a battle by bringing the leaders face to face to throw defiance at each other is a usual device of the old drama. Historically there were two battles between Lancaster and the king, but for dramatic purposes Marlowe has condensed them into one.

4. **countermand :** go counter to.

24. **satisfy :** make amends.

30. **civil :** well-ordered, peaceful.

34. **Saint George :** The patron saint of England, although he was not recognized as such till after the reign of Edward II.

36. **lusty :** brave.

39. **advance :** i.e. when they are beheaded.

52. **watched :** took under guard.

60. **Winchester :** The elder Spencer had been given this title.

62. **roundly :** emphatically.

79. **advice :** prudence.

82. See II. ii. 53.

86. **regiment :** rule, government.

87. **it :** i.e. to replace Edward II by his son.

88. **levelled :** aimed.

91. **clap :** go to work energetically.

ACT IV

SCENE I

11. **device :** plan, i.e. of escape.

SCENE II

Stage dir. **Enter Sir John of Hainault :** Compare Holinshed : "King Edward understanding all the queenes drift, at length sought the French king's favour, and did so much by letters and promise of bribes with him and his councell, that queene Isabell was destitute in manner of all helpe there, so that she was glad to withdraw into Heinault, by the comfort of John the lord Beaumont, the earle of Heinault his brother."

18. **time's advantage :** till a more advantageous time.

20. **shake off :** a difficult phrase. Perhaps it means that by standing together they would shake off past misfortunes. The emendation "share of" has been suggested.

24 **break a staff :** take part in a fight : the spear was the knightly weapon.

30. **Tanais :** the River Don ; i.e. to the eastern end of Europe.

51. **want :** are lacking.

59. **deserved :** earned.

61. **sith :** since.

66. **bid a base :** challenge : a term used in the game of prisoners' base when a player runs from one base and attempts to reach another before an opponent can touch him.

75. **motion :** plan.

SCENE III

10. The list which Spencer reads is of the rebel barons executed.

29. **premised :** taken for granted.

36. **divers :** several.

42. **round :** dance.

44. **rout :** company.

45. **Phoebus :** the sun god who drove the chariot of the sun across the sky.

52. **Bristow :** Bristol. The king went to Bristol and afterwards to Wales to raise an army against the queen.

53. **equal :** favourable.

SCENE IV

3. **Belgia :** the Netherlands.
5. **glaive :** sword.
21. **forwardness :** zeal.
24. **wreak :** avenge.

SCENE V

14. **unkind :** unnatural.
26. **for suspect :** lest suspicions be raised.
49. The queen sent Kent with forces to capture the Earl of Winchester and the king's men who were in Bristol. The mayor and people delivered the town and castle to the queen's forces.
54. Kent is on purpose dissembling. Some editors give the line to Mortimer.
60. **Catiline :** a Roman noble who in 63 B.C. raised a conspiracy against the Republic The plot was thwarted by Cicero.
69. **started :** forced away from.
72. **resteth :** remains to be done.
81. **Rice ap Howell :** a Welshman sent with the Earl of Leicester into Wales to apprehend the king.
83. **Countenance :** influence.
84. **runagates :** runaways, fugitives.

SCENE VI

4. **invasion :** attack.
14. **empery :** dominion.
18. **nurseries of arts :** the Universities.
19. **Plato and Aristotle :** the two most famous philosophers of ancient Greece.
20. **life contemplative :** i.e. in distinction to the life of action of a soldier.
33. Baldock's speech is given as information to the audience.
35. **fall on shore :** run aground.
40. **mickle :** much.
53. From Seneca's *Thyestes*. "He whom the morning sees in his pride, the evening sees laid low."
55. **leave :** cease.
passionate : emotional.
58. **stand not on :** never mind. The form of arrest demanded that the full title of the person charged should be given.
62. **stars :** the reference is to the old belief of the influence of the stars on a person's destiny.
70. **earns :** grieves.
81. **Killingworth :** Kenilworth Castle in Warwickshire.
88. **Pluto :** the king of the underworld in classical mythology.
89. **Charon's shore :** Charon was the boatman who rowed the dead across the rivers of the underworld.
96. **weeds :** garments.
101. **rent :** rend, burst asunder.
sphere of heaven : the sun.

ACT V

SCENE I

10. **herb :** The old superstition was that the herb dictamnum or dittany had a healing power of which animals had instinctive knowledge.
18. **mewed :** shut up.
20. **as :** that.
22. **plain me :** complain.
26. **regiment :** power, government.
32. **cave of care :** prison.

45. **Tisiphon :** one of the furies of Greek mythology whose heads were wreathed with snakes.

51. **brook :** endure.

55. **extreme :** extreme agony of thought.

63. **wished :** desired by Mortimer.

66. **watches of the element :** planets. Compare with this passage the last speech of Faustus in Marlowe's play.

67. **at a stay :** still.

76. **fondly :** foolishly.

77. **pass :** care.

84. **present :** immediate.

89. **seal :** be the ending of.

109. **enthronizèd :** enthroned.

133. **devoir :** duty.

144. **Berkeley :** Berkeley Castle between Gloucester and Bristol.

SCENE II

10. **imports :** affects our interests.

30. **or :** ere.

37. **privy seal :** the lesser State Seal, affixed to documents not requiring the Great Seal.

39. **drift :** plan.

41. Mortimer's plan to keep the king's whereabouts secret was so successful that two years after the king's murder in 1327 Kent plotted to set him free.

lieth : lodgeth.

58. **casts :** plans.

63. **curstly :** angrily.

69. Compare Holinshed : "The Queene would send unto him courteous and loving letters with apparrell and other such things but she would not once come neare to visit him, bearing him in hand that she durst not, for feare of the people's displeasure, who hated him so extreamelie."

111. **'sdain'st :** disdainest.

116. **redeem :** deliver.

120. **aged :** The king was only about forty-three at his death, but the chronicles refer to the "old king."

SCENE III

3. **dalliance :** delay.

6. **nightly bird :** the owl.

17. **air of life :** Latin "aura vitae," breath of life.

27. **channel :** ditch. Stowe relates this incident of the guard shaving the king in ditch water.

Stage dir. **Enter Kent :** Marlowe has antedated Kent's plot. See V. ii. 41.

SCENE IV

8. This ambiguous sentence is quoted by Holinshed from the account of Thomas de la Moor who lived in the reign of Edward II and was an eyewitness of his resignation.

13. **unpointed :** with no punctuation marks.

31. In Marlowe's time the Italians were regarded, and with reason, as special artists in modes of murder.

32. **lawn :** piece of linen.

37. **braver :** finer.

49. **congé :** bow.

51. **seal :** sign State letters with the Privy or Great Seals, i.e. he makes final decisions.

54. **Aristarchus :** The Alexandrian critic of the second century B.C., noted for his severity of judgment.

55. **breeching :** flogging.

59. **bashful puritan :** Marlowe is here referring to the feigned modesty attributed to the Puritans of his own time.

60. **imbecility :** weakness, lack of ability.

61. **onus quam gravissimum :** as heavy a burden as possible.

63. **suscepi . . . provinciam :** "I have undertaken that duty."

69. "I am too great for Fortune to harm me."—Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, VI.

Stage dir. **Enter King Edward the Third, etc.** The introduction of this piece of Coronation pageantry is typical of the spectacular appeal of the Elizabethan History Play.

77. **avouch :** defend.

78. **champion :** The King's Champion was an hereditary officer.

88. **martial law :** summary trial as with an army in the field.

SCENE V

1. Compare Holinshed : "They lodged the miserable prisoner in a chamber over a foule filthie dungeon, full of dead carrion, trusting so to make an end of him, with the abhominable stinch thereof : but he bearing it out stronglie, as a man of tough nature, continued still in life. . . . Whereupon when they sawe that such practises would not serve their turne, they came suddenlie one night into the chamber where he laie in bed fast asleepe, and with heavy featherbeds or a table (as some write) being cast upon him, they kept him down and . . . thrust up into his bodie an hot spit."

19. **token :** i.e. identifying himself as sent by Mortimer.

24. **pereat iste :** "let this man be killed."

25. **lake :** the moat around the castle.

38. **gear :** business.

40. Probably at this point the curtain before the recess stage was drawn and the scene was taken to be the dungeon.

53. **Caucasus :** i.e. from the hard mountain rock.

63. **distempered :** disordered.

69. Marlowe had probably no historical authority for this.

85. **joint :** limb.

91. **overmatched :** wearied with lack of sleep.

113. Compare Holinshed : "His crie did moove manie within the castell and towne of Berkley to compassion."

SCENE VI

4. **ghostly father :** advise him as confessor.

9. **savages :** i.e. to the furthest away land.

11. **Jove's huge tree :** the oak.

15. Marlowe has immediately followed the death of Edward II with the impeachment and execution of Mortimer which really took place three years afterwards in 1330.

44. **hand :** handwriting.

52. **hurdle :** used for dragging criminals to the scaffold.

The text of this edition is substantially that of the Second Quarto, though several widely-accepted emendations have been included. Scene locations and stage directions are those of Dyce's edition. The Introduction examines Marlowe's life and work, his dramatic achievement, the date and editions of this play, the source and treatment of history, and the construction of *Edward II*.